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SECRET

(19422)

ARABIA

**Additional correspondence
on the Buraimi frontier dispute**

January to December 1952

ADDITIONAL CORRESPONDENCE ON THE BURAIMI FRONTIER
DISPUTE—JANUARY—DECEMBER 1952

ES 1081/63

No. 1

QATAR AND ABU DHABI BOUNDARY DISPUTE : BRITISH AND
SAUDI CONFERENCE AT DAMMAM

Sir Rupert Hay to Mr. Eden. (Received March 8)

(No. 17. Confidential)

Bahrain,

February 27, 1952.

Sir,

I have the honour to forward herewith a report, for which I am indebted to Mr. Evans, on the conference between British and Saudi Arabian delegations which was held at Dammam between the 28th January and the 14th February in order to reach a solution of the dispute over the boundary between Qatar and Abu Dhabi on one hand and Saudi Arabia on the other which has been pending for nearly twenty years. The course of the discussions has been ably described by Mr. Evans and it will be sufficient to say here that while there is some possibility of an agreement being reached on the southern boundary of Qatar no progress was made in the settlement of the Abu Dhabi boundary. This was because the Saudi Arabian delegation had, it appears, received instructions from Ibn Saud not to modify in any way his 1949 claim. At the last meeting of the conference the Saudi Arabian delegation were informed that we were unable to accept Ibn Saud's 1949 claim as a basis for discussion but that we were willing to continue the discussions on the basis of his 1935 claim modified to include the Khor al 'Odaid within Abu Dhabi. The Saudi Arabian delegation undertook to obtain Ibn Saud's instructions on this proposal and in view of the impending visit of Sir Roger Makins to the Persian Gulf and Saudi Arabia the conference was then adjourned indefinitely.

2. The Saudi Arabian authorities made every effort to provide for our comfort in the somewhat primitive conditions which exist at Dammam. We were welcomed on arrival by Shaikh Yusuf Yasin and the Amir Abdul Muhsin and accorded a formal reception in the Airport Restaurant. We were then taken to Dammam and given rather inadequate accommodation in summer-houses in the gardens outside the town. After the first three days we were given much better accommodation in some new railway staff houses close to the railway station, which were hurriedly completed and furnished for our use and where we were very comfortable. We were entertained to a large Arab style dinner on the first night by the Amir Saud bin Jaluwi and a few days later to an American style dinner in the Executive House, Dhahran by the Amir Faisal. We had several cars placed at our disposal and were told we could go wherever we liked and in fact made a few expeditions. We were also taken by rail in a new Budd car to see the pier at Dammam. The Saudis were genuinely anxious to do their best for us and apologised for having nothing like the Dorchester Hotel in Dammam. On our departure the Amir Faisal presented us with Arab clothes and our office servants with substantial sums of money.

3. The Rulers of Qatar and Abu Dhabi were each given a large house and their food was provided by the Amir Saud. Ali was treated as an old friend and he rubbed noses with the Amirs whenever they met. The relations between the Saudis and Shakhbut was marked by extreme aloofness on both sides. Ali fortunately had the support of Abdulla Darwish (Qatar Leading Personalities No. 1) and while maintaining quite cordial relations with the Saudis was not, so far as I am aware, induced to surrender any portion of the territory he claimed. At the time of our departure he was on a visit to Riyadh to see Ibn Saud. On his return to Dohah he informed the Political Officer that he had discussed no business with the King and that the only reference the latter had made to the conference was an expression of resentment at the attitude of Shakhbut. The last named paid us frequent visits to furnish us with information about the disputed areas and to tell us tales, some of them untrue, about Saudi intrigues with the Omanis. He thanked us warmly for our support of his claims. His dislike of the Saudis is such that there is no fear of his being induced by them to give anything away, but it would probably help his cause if he were to pay more lip-service to Ibn Saud.

4. The meetings of the conference were mostly held in a large building at Dammam and the arrangements made for them were excellent. The Amir Faisal conducted the proceedings in a quiet and courteous manner, but appeared on occasions to be bored by them. He complained frequently of the climate and was clearly not in very good health. Hafiz Wahba was always most friendly and helpful and was clearly genuinely anxious to reach a reasonable compromise. Yusuf Yasin was also always most courteous in his personal relations with us but was very argumentative at the conference and never willing to concede a point. The Amir Saud was little more than a spectator. Mr. Evans' assistance was of the greatest value and we would have found it much more difficult to hold our ground had his services not been made available.

5. The conference up to date can hardly be described as a success but we have at least not given anything away and we have gained a considerable amount of information

regarding the evidence on which the Saudis base their claims. Before deciding what to do next we should await Ibn Saud's replies to the Ruler of Qatar's claims and to our proposal that the conference should continue with his 1935 claim modified by the inclusion of the Khor al 'Odaid in Abu Dhabi territory as a basis for discussion, and also the results of any personal approach which it may be found possible to make to him. It appears very improbable that he will agree to discussion being continued on the basis proposed and it is almost certain that he will press for the appointment of a fact-finding commission since he knows that, owing to the immense influence which he wields, if inquiries are made on the spot by a mixed British and Saudi Arabian commission many tribesmen who would ordinarily admit allegiance to Abu Dhabi will describe themselves as his subjects. Hafiz Wahba privately made the suggestion that the only hope of reaching a settlement lay in a personal approach by British representatives to Ibn Saud. Should this expedient fail I am of opinion that we should press for the reference of the dispute to arbitration, a course which the Ruler of Abu Dhabi strongly favours. The outcome of arbitration is admittedly unpredictable but I consider that we are likely to lose less by it than by reliance on a fact-finding commission which would be tantamount as Yusuf Yasin himself suggested, to the holding of a plebiscite and we should not lose so much face if as a result of it the Ruler of Abu Dhabi is deprived of a portion of what we and he regard as his territory.

6. Copies of the maps referred to in paragraphs 5 and 8 of Mr. Evans' report as appendices A and B were sent to Mr. Evans in the Foreign Office under cover of Mr. Weir's letter 1081/107/52 of February 20. Since I have no facilities for reproducing them I should be grateful if you could arrange for photostat copies to be produced and sent to the other recipients of this despatch. I should be grateful if I could at the same time be supplied with six copies.

7. I am sending copies of this despatch to Her Majesty's Embassies at Jeddah and Washington and the British Middle East Office, Fayid.

I have, &c.

W. R. HAY.

ES 1081/62

No. 2

DELIMITATION OF THE BOUNDARIES BETWEEN THE SHEIKHDOMS OF QATAR AND ABU DHABI AND SAUDI ARABIA

Mr. Pelham to Mr. Eden. (Received March 7)

(No. 34. Confidential)

Jedda,

February 29, 1952.

Sir,

I have in my telegrams Nos. 60 and 61 of the 27th February, briefly reported on my conversations, on the question of the delimitation of the boundaries between the Sheikhdoms of Qatar and Abu Dhabi and Saudi Arabia with His Royal Highness the Amir Feisal and Sheikh Yusuf Yasin at Riyadh on the 26th February. The purpose of this despatch is to describe the situation in greater detail. On arrival at Riyadh for Dhahran with Sir Roger Makins on the morning of the 25th February I was met by Sheikh Yusuf Yasin. He told me that the proposals made by Sir Rupert Hay at the time of the adjournment on February 14th of the Dammam Conference had been submitted to the King in writing by the Amir Feisal and that later during my visit the Amir wished to discuss with me the King's dictated reply. The Sheikh also told me that the King, though declared by his doctors to be in fair condition for a man of his age and hard life, was suffering from a bad cold and might not be able to receive me.

2. When later in the day I did see the King I found him in querulous mood and, although he graciously received Sir Roger Makins and made his usual remarks about old friendship with Great Britain, obviously neither in a condition nor in a suitable frame of mind in which I could hope to hold with him profitable conversation on the subject of the Frontier Conference. In reply to my thanks for his messages of condolence he expressed his personal sympathy and feeling of loss at the death of King George VI but added that a good country would continue to follow a straight policy and that he would cease friendly relations with any country which deviated from that course. Although the Americans had only entered into relations with Saudi Arabia comparatively recently he had had no difficulties which could not be settled with them by discussion. He had no dissident elements to contend with in the country; all his subjects followed his policy. He had had long standing friendship with Great Britain but people had come and given promises which they had not kept. Sir Percy Cox had made promises which were unfulfilled and Sir Percy after leaving had never written a word to him. (This was no doubt a reference to the 1915 Treaty.)

3. With some difficulty Sir Roger Makins and I managed to divert the King from this unprofitable line into further pleasantries and seeing that he tired we took our leave with his final words that he would always welcome any Englishman who was prepared to visit him.

4. After seeing Sir Roger Makins off next morning I spent three hours with His Royal Highness the Amir Feisal and Sheikh Yusuf Yasin. The Amir first gave a résumé of Frontier discussions since the London Conference of August 1951. At that Conference, he said, it had been agreed that a further Conference should be convened for a study of the claims of both sides and for the verification, on a reasonable and just basis, of the rights of King Ibn Saud and his forefathers and the rights of the Sheikhs and their forefathers. At the Dammam Conference both sides had put forward claims and a sub-committee had been appointed to examine and verify the respective rights. Soon, however, the British delegation had suggested that this process would take too long and after reference to London had proposed that a "line", which they called the Saudi Arabian claim of 1935, should be used as the basis for negotiation. The Amir had disclaimed any knowledge of this "line" but had said he would refer the proposal to the King.

5. In reply to my enquiry the Amir explained that the Saudi Arabian Government had no record of a 1935 "line" and that it must have been something that Fuad Bey Hamza had, about that time, drawn up with Sir Andrew Ryan as a basis for personal discussion. It had never been referred to the King and it was not recognised as an official proposal by the Saudi Arabian Government. In any case the basis of discussion had been laid down at the London Conference of August 1951 and it was that the present Conference should verify the claims and rights of both parties and if necessary set up a committee to verify the facts on the spot. This procedure had been discarded by the British delegation which had put forward a new and untenable basis for discussion after the Sub-Committee had been at work for only a short time.

6. The Amir then produced a paper saying that it was the King's answer to his written submission of the British delegate's proposals. From this he read substantially as follows:—

(i) We do not nor ever will agree to any line which involves the forfeiture of some of our territory to someone else.

(ii) The boundaries of Saudi Arabia are well known as is also the actual authority we have established within them. The tribes which occupy the lands claimed by Abu Dhabi are known to be our tribes. Only a person intent on aggression would claim these lands. We consider that the status of these lands and people is the same as if they were in the Riyadh area.

(iii) The evidence in support of our disputed rights is based on the facts of historical association and documents proving our authority—for instance, the recognition by the British Government in the 1915 Treaty signed at Qatif, and confirmed in the 1927 Treaty of Jeddah, of the fact that the Sheikh of Abu Dhabi and the other Sheikhs had jurisdiction only over their places on the coast; clearly the coast was not intended to include about 80,000 square miles of Saudi Arabian territory.

(iv) For these and other reasons we cannot agree to the British proposal and will not agree to the conclusion of an agreement which is not based on the recognition of our full rights. If the British Government insists on supporting claims like that of Abu Dhabi's we must take it that, though we never expected this in view of our long friendship with the British and our knowledge of British justice, the British have forgotten our traditional rights and friendship; all we should care for then would be our rights. The Dammam Conference had been convened to consider rights. We had no objection to this Conference as long as the British kept to the basis of facts. Their only interest should be in facts.

7. I replied that I noted that the King would not accept the 1935 "line" as a basis for discussion, on the other hand my Government had never recognised the Saudi Arabian Government's 1949 claims. The Amir emphasised that the King had rejected the British delegation's proposal because he did not recognise any 1935 "line"; he was not previously aware of it and it in no way represented his views.

8. I said that I would report accordingly and asked the Amir if he had anything further to say which might help towards a resumption of the Conference. He replied that the basis should remain that agreed in London in August 1951 but that his attitude was quite flexible as to what procedure might now be adopted. He put forward the personal suggestion that, before the Conference was fully resumed representatives, one or more on each side, should consider and decide on the principles on which the verification of respective rights should be based. The facts could then be considered in accordance with those principles and the rights verified.

9. I wondered whether it might not be very difficult to get agreement on what were the principles which could be adopted and thought that in any case it might be a very long process. We, and I understood they, were anxious to explore every way to achieve an early reasonable solution and it would appear that there might be endless difficulties in following the course he proposed. In such cases it was often best to bring in an absolutely impartial third party. This was a purely personal observation but in all the circumstances this, after all, might be the way to reach a just settlement with a minimum of difficulty.

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10. The Amir Feisal at first seemed to favour this suggestion though it appeared from further conversation that his idea was rather that the Conference itself, on the suggested representatives meeting to decide on principles, might have recourse to a third party on points on which they could not agree. He asked if I would like him to propose this to the King. I replied that my personal thought had been more in the lines of a third party being called on to make a decision on the submissions by both sides on the whole matter. I did not quite see how such a person could be kept standing by to decide on various and unrelated points in the dispute.

11. Finally we attempted to summarise some conclusion from the long discussion as follows:—

- (i) Both sides were anxious to reach a just and early settlement of the Frontier question.
- (ii) King Ibn Saud did not accept the British proposal that the Conference should resume discussion on the basis of the 1935 "line".
- (iii) His Royal Highness had put forward the personal proposal that an attempt should be made definitely to lay down agreed principles to be adopted for the study and verification of the facts in regard to the claims put forward by each side (in accordance with the terms of the London Agreement). In the meanwhile the Conference to be considered as adjourned.
- (iv) The Ambassador had put forward the personal suggestion that consideration should be given to the possibility of appointing an impartial arbitrator.
- (v) Points (iii) and (iv) were purely personal and exploratory and subject to reference to higher authority but were evidence of the desire of both the Amir and the Ambassador to find some means of working towards a solution satisfactory to both parties.

12. The Amir said he would now wait to hear of any proposals which Her Majesty's Government might wish to make.

13. Later that evening Sheikh Yusuf Yasin came to see me about various small matters after which he brought the conversation round to the morning meeting. He emphasised that this was only a private talk but it seemed to him, in view of the evidence available of Saudi Arabian rights which the British appeared to push aside, that the British attitude seemed to be determined by a fear of Saudi Arabia establishing its rights on the Trucial Coast. I replied that in view of the warm friendship held by the King I could not understand his thought in this direction. We had no thought whatever that legitimate Saudi Arabian interests could or would be damaging to British interests. The matter under review was, although of some intrinsic importance, of such minor degree that it could not affect the long standing warm friendship existing between our two countries. Her Majesty's Government's attitude was solely governed by the fact that it was responsible for the Foreign Affairs of the Trucial Sheikhdoms. As His Excellency must have realised during the Conference the British delegation were merely carrying out this duty to the extent to which it had been assigned to them.

14. Yusuf Yasin suddenly said that we could rest assured that the Oil Company played no part in his Government's attitude and conduct in regard to this frontier question but it seemed that the British Government had only renewed their interest in this territory when the Oil Companies started activities therein. I expressed some surprise at this remark and said I was sure that the British Government's attitude was, as it had always been, activated by the desire for a solution on fair and just grounds and without regard to any competition between Oil Companies. Yusuf then switched to the point in the King's message referred to in paragraph 6 above in which the King had said the the Treaty of 1915 had referred to the Trucial Sheikhdoms as existing on the Coast. This surely did not mean that the Sheikh territories included 80,000 square miles of Saudi Arabian territory. On being cornered, however, he agreed that the Treaty provided for a later delimitation and I pointed out that the term "coast" had no specific meaning other than to identify that the Sheikhdoms bordered the Trucial Coast. Yusuf then complained that in the course of the proceedings of the Sub-Committee of the Dammam Conference Mr. Pelly had refused to consider Saudi Arabian zakat (tax) returns which Yusef had produced to prove that the Saudi Government had exercised authority in a disputed area for more than twenty years and therefore owned that area.

15. I concluded by saying that no doubt there were cogent reasons for such refusal but that it was this kind of conflict which had made me think of my personal suggestion that decision might only be found possible by placing it in the hands of an absolutely impartial third party if that, after mature consideration, was agreed as the best solution. Her Majesty's Government were interested only in reaching a just and reasonable settlement of this long drawn out dispute.

16. I fear that this despatch is long and discursive but I have felt it necessary to detail the process of my conversations in Riyadh in an attempt to clothe the position as stated in my telegrams under reference with the atmosphere surrounding the whole question and to indicate the difficulties of dealing with a senile but absolute monarch who is convinced of his rights, benevolence and power and may, I am sure, only be swayed in this matter inasmuch

as we are able to get the Amir Feisal and Sheikh Yusuf Yasin into agreement with us. These latter, on the other hand, revere the King and are not likely to engage in persuading him unless they are able to demonstrate that they have achieved success in preserving to Saudi Arabia territorial rights over lands to which no other overwhelming claim can be substantiated. I believe that it would not be difficult to effect a reasonable delimitation of the sheikhdom of Qatar if only because King Ibn Saud is personally favourably disposed towards the Ruler. But the King regards the Sheikh of Abu Dhabi as a contemptible person who has the effrontery to endeavour to usurp his territory while hiding behind the skirts of Great Britain. To this there may be no solution in the present reign unless the Amir Feisal can be satisfied to the point that he can persuade the King.

17. I should add that the King's attitude contains an element of the idea of suzerainty or at least that the Sheikhs should be very willing to please him. On my first visit to him in November, 1951, he had mentioned that if any of the Sheikhs wanted anything they knew that he could be generous. During my recent visit to Riyadh the Amir Feisal said that, of course, if the Sheikh of Abu Dhabi visited the King and asked for his benevolence no doubt his Majesty would be very generous. I had to retort that this was hardly a matter of generosity or the gift of something which was the possession of the owner but a problem of establishing a just delimitation of frontiers. The Amir was, of course, able to reply that the only possible process for this was carefully to verify all the facts; the Saudis were not as anxious for a very quick settlement as they were for absolute right and justice.

18. I venture to add my personal opinion that short of a break-up of the Saudi Arabian Kingdom, which I do not envisage, on the death of the King, or a major war, time seems to be on the side of the Saudi Arabians who have the power of creeping enforcement of jurisdiction in at least some of the disputed territory. It would therefore appear advisable that we should soon decide on the absolute limit to which we are prepared to go to achieve agreement and to make vigorous efforts to that end either on the lines of the Amir Feisal's proposal for the establishment of principles whereby to judge verified facts or by an offer of arbitration on the grounds that, whatever the evidence adduced by both sides, it is unlikely that the two disputants can be their own judge.

19. In talking to me privately about this question my American colleague has mentioned the possibility of arbitration only to dismiss the idea because arbitration might be an unduly lengthy process the rules of which it would be difficult to get the Saudis to understand. He has suggested that the best result would be a political decision worked out through diplomatic channels. But it has been clear to me that in saying this he regards the Trucial Coast Sheikhdoms as an anachronism kept alive only by British protection and hardly worthy of the effort necessary to preserve to them small pieces of territory the ownership of which their more powerful neighbour disputes with some element of reason. While this may sound somewhat ruthless it does nevertheless occur to me that if all else fails there might still remain the possibility of diplomatic negotiation supported by some expert advice provided we were first to have established with him the limit to which the Sheikh of Abu Dhabi could reasonably be expected to go.

20. I am sending copies of this despatch to Her Majesty's Representatives at Washington and Bahrain and to the Head of the British Middle East Office at Fayid.

I have, &c.

G. C. PELHAM.

EA 1084/31

No. 3

**NON-RECOGNITION BY THE SAUDIS OF THE AUTHORITY OF THE
SULTAN OVER THE BURAIMI AREA**

Mr. Pelham to Mr. Eden. (Received March 31)

(No. 93. Confidential)

Jedda,

(Telegraphic)

March 31, 1952.

Frontiers.

Official in charge of Ministry of Foreign Affairs on March 29 read to me an oral message from Saudi Arabian Government (he stated that it was not specifically from the King and was not an official protest) of which the following paragraph is summary.

2. The British Government is aware that the Saudi Arabian Government does not recognise the authority or influence of the Sultan of Muscat or trucial Sheikhs over the area of Buraimi and provinces beyond it and outside the coast of Oman. The Saudi Arabian Government view the activities by responsible British officials in the area as not in accord with good relations and spirit which should prevail between the two Governments until the

frontier discussions are completed. The Saudi Arabian Government has been obliged to inform the Amirs of Buraimi, who acknowledge allegiance to King Ibn Saud and his sovereignty over them, that it shall never be possible to recognise any sovereignty over them by the Sheikhs of the Oman coast. The Saudi Arabian Government requests that the activities of British officials be stopped until the discussions in progress regarding demarcation are completed so that there may be no fresh difficulties placed in the way of reaching a solution.

3. The above presumably refers to Wilton's visit. I think the manner of presentation was in view of the conversation with Yusuf Yasin reported in my telegram No. 82 EA 1088/3 to which, in answer, I briefly referred. Yusuf is not immediately attending the Arab League. I suggest that if either he or Feisal comes through Jeddah I should repeat the same line but otherwise make no answer.

EA 1084/33

No. 4

INTERVIEW WITH THE SULTAN ABOUT THE BURAIMI SITUATION

Sir Rupert Hay to Mr. Ross. (Received April 16)

(Confidential)

Bahrain,

Sir,

April 2, 1952.

I have had two long talks with the Sultan about the Buraimi situation which was last referred to in my telegram No. 149 of the 3rd March. On the first occasion I found him in a most unreceptive mood, no doubt on account of his resentment at Wilton's mission, cf. Muscat telegram to me No. 29 of the 22nd February. He said that the position was the same as it was in the time of his father and grandfather and that he was not stronger than they were. He added quite bluntly that he had no control. He admitted that he had taken no action to get in touch with the tribes as he promised to do when I talked to him in December last and said he had not discussed the Buraimi question with Hazza, a brother of the Ruler of Abu Dhabi, whom he met recently on the Batinah Coast. I found him in a somewhat better mood when I spoke to him on the same subject a few days later. I said that I understood that he was annoyed by Wilton's mission but that we had considered it necessary to despatch him to the Buraimi area owing to the importance he attached to reaching some agreement with the tribes about oil exploration and ascertaining the extent of Saudi intrigues. I emphasised the fact that Wilton had not told the tribes that the oil company were ready to negotiate with them again. I reminded him that he had once asked me whether there was to be any new policy with regard to the tribes and that I had replied in the negative. I said that this was still the case but that I could not guarantee that it would always be so. I pointed out that in recent years Her Majesty's Government had consistently supported the Sultan's claim to sovereignty over the Na'im and Al bu Shamis of Buraimi but that when Lorimer wrote in the first decade of the century he described them as independent and that if the matter were taken to an International Court there was considerable doubt whether the Sultan's claim would prevail unless he had done something in the meanwhile to establish his sovereignty on the spot. I said that so far as Beni Ka'ab of Mahadhah were concerned, Bertram Thomas wrote in one of his books that he had extended the Sultan's sovereignty over their country in or about 1928 but that Her Majesty's Government, so far as I am aware, had never officially recognised this. I concluded by saying that I was told by Bird that he had agreed not to enter into discussions with the tribes concerned at once in order to give him time to assert his authority over them and I inquired what he was going to do to bring this about.

2. The Sultan replied that it was entirely incorrect for the Political Officer, Trucial Coast to hold direct conversations with the tribes in the Buraimi area and particularly to enquire from them about their relations with the Sultan and said that his action could only encourage them in their ideas of independence and would retard his hopes of making any progress in the area for a long time. Something of this sort has always been occurring every two or three years to encourage the tribes and prevent them from co-operating with him. We should deal with all matters relating to these tribes through our Muscat Consulate and himself and our Political Officer in the Trucial Coast and should not attempt to enter into relations with them in any way. He made no specific "claim" to the area as such but it was included in Oman and any part of Oman which was not directly subject to one of the Trucial States was covered by his Sultanate. So far as his conversation with Bird was concerned he denied that he had given any undertaking to assert himself. He had no "excuse" for asserting himself at present as the tribes concerned, who used to raid in his territory, have for some time now given him no trouble. He did not wish to assert himself purely for the sake of oil, (Woods-Ballard told me previously that the Sultan feared the Imam's reactions if it became clear that he was establishing his authority over the Buraimi area purely for the sake of the oil it might contain). He thought the danger of Saudi or Arabian American Oil Company penetration in the area was greatly exaggerated, (Chauncy tells me that in a conversation with

him he described us as being "panicky" on this subject). He finally suggested the oil company should now ask the Shaikhs to refund the money paid to them three or four years ago or to fulfil the conditions under which the payments were made to them and see what their reactions would be.

3. I enclose a copy of the letter of 1931 referred to in Gethin's telegram to me No. 29 of the 22nd February. The present Sultan was not then reigning but was President of the Council. It will be seen that the letter contains no specific assurance that British political officers would only deal with the Sultan's subjects through him. The Shaikh mentioned belonged to the Bani Bu Ali of Ja'alan in Oman proper.

4. I have been told by Woods-Ballard that when the services of the British officer for which the Sultan has asked are made available he intends to place him in charge of a force of about one hundred men which is to be stationed at Sohar on the Batinah Coast. Woods-Ballard thinks that the Sultan may have some idea of using this force eventually to strengthen his authority in the Buraimi area but the Sultan does not admit this.

5. I feel myself very strongly that unless we receive much more concrete evidence of the Saudis' intention to establish themselves in the Buraimi area than we have at present we should be wise to continue our previous policy of regarding the Na'im and Al bu Shamis of the Buraimi area as the Sultan's tribes. It will indeed be extremely dangerous to adopt any other course for so long as the boundary negotiations with the Saudis are pending. So far as the Beni Ka'ab are concerned, I enclose a translation of a letter from Obaid bin Juma which the Sultan sent me after my recent talk with him. I would refrain from any formal recognition of his alleged acquisition of sovereignty over the tribe so far as he is concerned but would, if necessary, support his claim to it vis-a-vis the Saudis. We cannot, in my opinion, possibly undertake that our Political Officer on the Trucial Coast will have no direct dealings with the Shaikhs of these tribes, but when he does meet them he should emphasise the fact that we regard them as the Sultan's subjects and that our official relations with them must be conducted through him.

6. So far as the oil company is concerned I recommend that for the present they should concentrate on the Huqf area. The Sultan's suggestion, however, that they should approach the Buraimi Shaikhs on the subject of the money they paid them a few years ago does give them an opportunity of getting into direct touch with these Shaikhs again without offending the Sultan. Should they decide to make an approach to the Shaikhs on these lines they would be wise to make sure first that its timing and method have the Sultan's concurrence. I realise the company will be disappointed at the Sultan's cautious policy but even we and they will earn his lasting resentment if we decide to go ahead without his concurrence. In fact he did hint that should we do this we would find him less accommodating in the matter of naval and air bases in his territory. I also think it is possible that there may be something in what Woods-Ballard says about the proposed force at Sohar and that it is possible that the Sultan may intend to do more than he says.

I have, &c.

W. R. HAY.

Enclosure No. 1

Letter dated the 6th Sha'ban 1367 (12/6/1948) from Obaid bin Juma al Ka'abi to H.H. Saiyid Said bin Taimur, Sultan of Muscat and Oman

After Compliments.

We have received your esteemed letter. We understood it, obeyed your order and carried it out. After we had received your letter Mr. Bird sent us a letter and we went to him and we had discussions with him as you were informed about it. We proceeded toward your side to see Your Majesty but we met Saiyid Ahmed bin Ibrahim in the village of Sowaiq who asked us to go back with him in your service in accordance with your order. I therefore returned with him to where you directed him. In any case the affairs of our country and ourselves are for God and for you to dispose of. We are your subjects and have no other course than the one you direct us to follow. Everything is under your discretion. After we carry out your orders and return with Saiyid Ahmed bin Ibrahim to Your Majesty we will tell you the facts which will confirm our obedience. There is nothing here which is not in accordance with your orders.

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Enclosure No. 2

Political Agency & H.B.M.'s
Consulate,
Muscat.

July 22, 1951.

No. 97 of 1931.

To

The President of the Council of Ministers to H.H. the Sultan of Muscat and Oman, Muscat

After Compliments.

I have the honour to forward herewith two letters received from Shaikh Ali bin Abdullah. Subjects of H.H. the Sultan wishing to address the Political Agent or the Political Resident should communicate through the Council of Ministers.

This is what had to be said and salams.

R. G. ALBAN,
Captain.

Political Agent & H.B.M.'s Consul,
Muscat.

ES 1081/69

No. 5

REPORT ON RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE BOUNDARY DISPUTE*Sir Rupert Hay to Mr. Eden. (Received April 17)*

(No. 27. Confidential)

Bahrain,

Sir,

April 3, 1952.

I have the honour to submit the following views on the course of action to be followed with reference to the boundary dispute with the Saudis in the light of recent developments as reported in Mr. Pelham's despatch No. 34 (1082/64/52) of the 29th February and elsewhere. It has long been my opinion that our only hope of reaching an early settlement lay in what the American Ambassador Mr. Hare described to be as a Draconian decision by the King. In view of his old age and present state of health and of the unbending attitude he has adopted over the boundary dispute the only circumstances in which he might be expected to make any concession would be if the Ruler of Abu Dhabi were to make an abject approach to him and acknowledge him as his lord and master, cf. paragraph 17 of Mr. Pelham's despatch. Shaikh Shakhbut, when he was at Dammam, said that he would go to Riyadh if we wished him to do so, but in view of the way he was treated by the Saudis while at Dammam I very much doubt if he would agree to go now and if he were to go I consider it most improbable that he would adopt a sufficiently submissive attitude, nor do I think it desirable that we should urge him to do so. In these circumstances I am of opinion that there is no hope of reaching a reasonable settlement for so long as the King rules. When he is removed from the scene our prospects cannot be worse and may in fact improve. I think it is agreed that the Amir Saud is a weaker and more reasonable personality than his father and his accession should be to our advantage especially if it results in the diminution of the influence of Yusuf Yasin. For this reason I am of opinion that time is on our side. It is true that the Saudis may use it for the "creeping enforcement of jurisdiction" referred to in paragraph 18 of Mr. Pelham's despatch, but they have been doing this for a long time and we must do our best to counter it.

2. We must, if possible, avoid the appointment of a fact finding commission which Yusuf Yasin envisages as being tantamount to the holding of a plebiscite. Apart from the physical difficulties which would attend the visit of a commission to the waterless desert which comprises the disputed area it is a foregone conclusion that the majority of the bedouin would vote for Ibn Saud from whom they have more to fear than Shakhbut. Hafiz Wahba remarked in private conversation that none of the bedouin could be relied upon to speak the truth and they would merely say what suited their interests best.

3. I think that the Dammam conference must be resumed at some stage but the later the better and I was pleased to see from Mr. Riches' letter No. 1082/88/52 of March 24, 1952, to Eastern Department that Hafiz Wahba does not think resumption will be possible until October. When the conference is resumed we can either continue indefinitely arguing about principles and facts, which will lead us nowhere, or we can press at once for a reference to arbitration. If the Saudis urge for it we might in the meanwhile as suggested by the Amir Faisal (paragraph 11(iii) of Mr. Pelham's despatch) endeavour to lay down agreed principles either through diplomatic channels or by means of a sub-committee, but it is very unlikely that anything more than a few vague generalisations will result.

4. The main objection to the indefinite prolongation of the conference is that Messrs. Petroleum Development (Trucial Coast) Limited will be debarred from operations in the Sabkhat Matti area. Should we however now announce that in view of the Saudi refusal to

accept our proposed basis for further discussions we refuse to continue the conference and to be bound further by the restrictions on the movements of the oil companies and the Trucial Oman Levies we should almost certainly be faced by an incursion into the area by Aramco personnel similar to that which took place in 1949. I am at a loss to know how we should deal with it. It is true that the uncompromising attitude adopted by the King to all our proposals would justify our breaking off the conference, but I think on the whole our best policy is to resume it next autumn and then unless there is any change in the Saudis attitude press for a reference to arbitration.

5. I have long had in mind the possibility of unilateral action and I consider that we should in any case try and determine in consultation with Shaikh Shakhbut, and if necessary, with Shaikh Ali of Qatar what we regard as the reasonable frontier and be ready should necessity arise to declare that we regard this as the frontier and that we propose to do our best to see that it is observed as such. I have already suggested a line for Abu Dhabi in my letter No. 1081/151/22 of March 12 to Mr. Sarell. I think we shall have to do something of this sort if the Saudis refuse to agree to a proposal to refer the dispute to arbitration and no other solution of the problem can be found, but we should be faced with the difficulty of enforcing the observance of the frontier to which I have referred in paragraph 4 above.

6. The King's reply to our proposals as described in paragraph 6 of Mr. Pelham's despatch is uncompromising and almost ill-mannered. We need not copy the manners but we should be equally uncompromising unless the Saudis show a change of heart. In particular, we should not overlook their preposterous repudiation of their 1935 claim in the manner proposed in Jeddah Embassy's letter to Eastern Department No. 1082/79/52 of the 10th March. It is perfectly clear from Sir Andrew Ryan's telegrams Nos. 77 and 84 of April 2 and April 8, 1935 that he believed that the Saudi memorandum to which he referred was a formal counter-claim. In any case it was addressed from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and handed by the Deputy Minister to the Ambassador in the course of the negotiations. The claim that it was not authorised must therefore be based on an allegation

- (i) that Fuad Hamza was lying in his description of it,
- or (ii) that as experienced a diplomat as Sir Andrew Ryan totally misunderstood the nature of what was obviously a most important document.
- or (iii) that the document on Jeddah's files is a forgery.

7. I do not think there is much to choose between diplomatic negotiations supported by expert advice, the possibility of which is referred to in paragraph 19 of Mr. Pelham's despatch, and procedure by conference. The former course was followed for several years before the War and for some two years since without success; the latter course has only recently been adopted and shows no signs of being more successful. So far as this Residency is concerned I should see no objection to the reversion to the former course which is perhaps more orthodox and causes less dislocation. I fully agree with Mr. Pelham that it is desirable to establish with the Ruler of Abu Dhabi the limit up to which he can be expected to go, cf. paragraph 5 above, and I should be grateful for instructions to proceed accordingly.

8. I am sending copies of this despatch to Her Majesty's representatives in Jeddah and Washington and the Head of British Middle East Office at Fayid.

I have, &c.

W. R. HAY.

EA 1084/31

No. 6

KING IBN SAUD AND THE AMIRS OF BURAIMI*Foreign Office to Mr. Riches*

(No. 180. Confidential)

Foreign Office,

(Telegraphic)

April 7, 1952.

Your telegram No. 93 [of 30th March: Saudi Arabian frontiers].
The Saudi assertions cannot be permitted to pass.

2. At the next opportunity please inform the Amir Feisal or Yusuf Yasin orally that Her Majesty's Government cannot accept the Saudi statement that the Amirs of Buraimi acknowledge allegiance to King Ibn Saud or that he exercises sovereignty in the area. Her Majesty's Government protest most strongly against the Saudi Government's approach to these Amirs and the declaration to them that it will never be possible to recognise any sovereignty over them by the Sheikhs of the Oman Coast. Such action on the part of the Saudi Government is highly improper at a time when negotiations for a settlement of the frontier are in progress.

3. Her Majesty's Government have never agreed and cannot agree to any restriction on the activities of British officials in the course of their administrative duties. Moreover the continuation of such duties even in the disputed areas was expressly reserved at the London conference with the agreement of both sides. Her Majesty's Government cannot therefore admit that Mr. Wilton's visit was in any way improper or inimical to the good relations which they earnestly desire.

SULTAN'S ATTITUDE TO THE BURAIMI SHAIKHS

Mr. Sarell to Sir Rupert Hay (Bahrain)

(Confidential)

Foreign Office,

Sir,

June 6, 1952.

I am sorry that we have not replied before to your letter No. 1538/79/52 of April 2 about the Sultan's attitude towards the Buraimi Shaikhs.

2. The Sultan's views, as reported in your letter, do not seem to get us any further towards reconciling the four aspects of this question, which are:—

- (i) the Shaikhs' refusal to admit the Sultan's sovereignty and threat of "going over" to the Saudis if the oil company does not sign agreements with them;
- (ii) The Company's unwillingness to negotiate with the Shaikhs without the Sultan's prior approval, in order not to prejudice their relations with him both generally and in the Huqf;
- (iii) the Sultan's unwillingness to allow direct negotiations between the Company and the Shaikhs over whom he is unable to exercise any authority; and his failure to recognise the Saudi danger;
- (iv) the Saudis' intention of exploiting the situation to their own advantage wherever possible.

3. We could only deal with (iv) above either by encouraging the Company to deal with the Shaikhs independently without regard to the Sultan's views (as was their original intention last year), or by adhering to our present policy of regarding them all as nominally subject to the Sultan. The Company's attitude at (ii) above, with which at the present stage we are in agreement precludes the former and means that we must try once more to work out a solution within the framework of our present policy.

4. The difficulties here of course lie in the attitudes of the Shaikhs and the Sultan as shown at (i) and (iii) respectively and which, as we have found from experience during recent months appear to be virtually irreconcilable. We understand now that the Company would prefer to deal with the Shaikhs only through the Sultan, i.e. the Sultan would pay the Shaikhs a share of the royalties in return for their assurance to him that they would allow the Company to operate in their territory. Alternatively with the Sultan's approval, they would be prepared to negotiate direct with the Shaikhs as they originally intended, leaving the question of sovereignty to be settled between the Shaikhs and the Sultan. The Company consider however that there is nothing more they can do at this stage and that they must leave it to us to try and get the Sultan to agree to a satisfactory arrangement.

5. It is clearly impossible for us here to lay down how this can be achieved and we must therefore leave the tactics to you and Chauncy. Subject to your views however we consider that the following points should be observed in any solution which is reached:—

- (a) We should not allow ourselves to be blackmailed by the Shaikhs into taking precipitate action by an exaggeration of the Saudi danger (cf. paragraph 5 of your letter of April 2);
- (b) The Sultan's approval should be obtained before any negotiations are embarked upon;
- (c) The success of the Huqf venture should not be prejudiced by any action taken in the Buraimi area;
- (d) The Political Officer at Sharjah should not get involved in further discussions about sovereignty with the Buraimi Shaikhs. The information already obtained shows fairly conclusively that the Shaikhs are not willing to recognise the Sultan;
- (e) Any change of attitude by individual Shaikhs (e.g. Saqr) might be met with the suggestion that the Shaikh should inform the Sultan so that arrangements may be made through the latter for the oil Company to enter the Shaikh's territory. If however one of the Shaikhs were to request spontaneously that the change of attitude should be conveyed to the Sultan through our Political representatives there would be no objection to this being done; and
- (f) The Sultan should again be encouraged to take action to assert his authority and, while doing so, to agree to some compromise arrangement for negotiations between the Shaikhs and the oil company. We agree that, if the Sultan is willing, there would be advantage in arranging a meeting between him and the Shaikh of Abu Dhabi in order to discuss common frontier problems.

6. We see little purpose in the suggestion made by the Sultan that the Company should ask the Sultan to ask the Shaikhs what they have done with the money given to them in 1948, especially if the Sultan will not agree to negotiations, since this only seems likely to annoy

the Shaikhs. You may wish to discuss this with the Company representatives. The Company have suggested that:—

- (i) a representative of Her Majesty's Government might be present to witness the signature of any assurance given by the Shaikhs to the Sultan, as a guarantee (for the Shaikhs) that the Sultan's side of the bargain would be kept; and
- (ii) our representative might offer to accompany a representative of the Sultan in an approach to the Shaikhs in order to seek an agreement between them and the Sultan.

As regards (i) we would see no objection provided the presence of Her Majesty's Government's representative was not regarded by the Shaikhs as involving Her Majesty's Government in any financial commitment in the event of the Sultan's failure to fulfil any obligations he undertook. As regards (ii) we are doubtful whether the Sultan would agree to any such proposal even if, as seems unlikely, he was prepared to send his own representative on such a mission.

7. On the whole it seems unlikely that Aramco would want to indulge in operations in the Buraimi area, which is a long way from their present fields, especially as the Saudis are evidently pressing them to surrender a large part of their concession. If there were any signs of their doing so it would no doubt be possible to convey to them the political undesirability of their intentions. It is still less likely that the Saudis would be able to induce any new oil Company to have dealings with the Shaikhs. Saudi attempts at infiltration will no doubt continue, although probably with less pressure and limelight than at the time of the Frontier Conference, but we cannot help feeling that the fact that we have an oil Company which is willing to operate at Buraimi whereas the Saudis have not, should in the end tell in favour of the Sultan. The latter's proposed force at Sohar may help to strengthen his position.

8. I am sending a copy of this letter to Riches at Jeddah whose views we should be glad to have on our assessment of Aramco's attitude in the previous paragraph.

I have &c.

R. F. G. SARELL.

(1)

REPORT OF TURKI'S MOVE TO HAMASAH

Sir R. Hay to Mr. Eden. (Received August 23)

(No. 434. Confidential)
(Telegraphic)

Bahrain,
August 23, 1952.

The Ruler of Bahrain states that he has been reliably informed that Turki Bin Ataishan till recently Amir Ras Tanurah left Hasa for Hamasah in Buraimi with four cars and a wireless Y set about August 16.

2. Please inform Sultan and ask him to pass on any news he receives of the party.

(2)

ARRIVAL OF TURKI AT HAMASAH

Foreign Office to Mr. Riches

(No. 400. Confidential)
(Telegraphic)

Foreign Office,
September 2, 1952.

Bahrain telegram No. 450 to me [of September 2: Saudi incursion in Buraimi].

Please inform Saudi Government of reported arrival of Turki and armed troops at Hamasah and enquire urgently the reason for this movement.

2. For your own information, as the incursion appears to be in Muscat territory I can only protest at the request of the Sultan on his behalf. I will consider further action on hearing Sultan's reaction and in the light of the Saudi reply.

EA 1084/46

(3)

Sir R. Hay to Mr. Eden. (Received September 2)(No. 450. Confidential)
(Telegraphic)*Bahrain,
September 2, 1952.*

My telegram No. 445.

Political Officer Trucial Coast reports arrival of messenger from Zaid brother of Shakhbut and Saqr of Nain with news that Turki arrived Hamasah on August 31 with 80 Saudis 50 of whom are armed troops. Zaid and Saqr have asked for immediate reply stating Her Majesty's Government's attitude. Latter has indicated that failure of his request for oil negotiations leaves him with no alternative but to turn to the Saudis. Other Sheikhs of Buraimi area are expected to come to terms with them at once. Shakhbut is in Sharjah and was due to leave for India September 6 but has offered to postpone his departure. I am ordering Political Officer of Trucial Coast to tell Zaid that we will do all we can to support him should Saudis interfere with him and to request Shakhbut to remain at Sharjah for the present. Saqr of Nain is Sultan's subject and we cannot promise him any assistance. I am asking Chauncy to inform the Sultan of the facts of the case at once and report his reactions. Saudi interference up to date appears to be confined to his territory and tribes and prima facie any protest we make will have to be on his behalf.

EA 1084/49

No. 9

(1)

LONDON AGREEMENT AND SAUDI TROOPS*Mr. Riches to Mr. Eden. (Received September 4)*(No. 226. Confidential)
(Telegraphic)*Jedda,
September 4, 1952.*

Your telegram No. 400.

I enquired accordingly this morning. Ministry of Foreign Affairs state that no information is available in Jedda and are referring to Riyadh.

2. Please instruct urgently whether I should maintain with the Saudis that the London Agreement covers movements by Saudi troops as well as Trucial Levies.

Foreign Office please pass to Bahrain Priority, Muscat and Sharjah as my telegrams Nos. 55, 1 and 1 respectively.

EA 1084/49

(2)

Foreign Office to Mr. Riches(No. 408. Confidential)
(Telegraphic)*Foreign Office,
September 4, 1952.*

Your telegram of September 3: [Saudi incursion in Buraimi].

You should maintain that the London Agreement covers movements by Saudi troops as well as Trucial Levies.

2. This is clearly the intention from the record of the Tenth Session of the Foreign Office Meeting held on the 23rd August, 1951, copy of which is with the Saudis.

3. As the incursion appears to be into Muscat territory you should not protest unless further instructed, but confine yourself to enquiry.

EA 1084/52

No. 10

SULTAN'S REQUEST FOR AID FROM THE UNITED KINGDOM*Her Majesty's Consul-General to Mr. Eden. (Received September 5)*(No. 83. Confidential)
(Telegraphic)*Muscat,
September 5, 1952.*

Reference paragraph 2 of Foreign Office telegram No. 400 to Jedda.

The Sultan writes that he has received a cable and letter from Zaid containing the same information as I have passed to him from you and that Saudi party have camped west of Hamasah. Saqr was invited to meet them which he did for few minutes but appears opposed to them.

2. The Sultan notes that the arrival of the party appears to be confirmed but the purpose is not clear. He also observes that part of Buraimi area included in Hamasah is known to be within Oil and Petroleum Development (Oman) Concession area. Hence entry of Saudi party appears to be encroachment of the Sultan's territory.

3. He further states that as it has always been his policy to refer such important matters to Her Majesty's Government for assistance and they have always helped him, he requests facts be brought to Her Majesty's Government's notice with the request to take up the matter with the Saudi Government. He will be very pleased to be guided by the advice of Her Majesty's Government in this important matter.

4. Copies of Sultan's and my letters written on his return from Ras Al Hadd sent today.

EA 1084/59

No. 11

(1)

POSSIBLE AIR RECONNAISSANCE OVER HAMASAH*Sir R. Hay to Mr. Eden. (Received September 8)*(No. 466. Confidential)
(Telegraphic)*Bahrain,
September 8, 1952.*

My telegram No. 459 paragraph 5.

Baird has returned and reports that it would be possible to send a party of 1 officer and 50 levies to Al Muaiqi but he and I both think that from 25 to 30 men will be sufficient. I very much hope that you will find it possible to authorise me to despatch this party by the time I reach Sharjah on September 10. I consider any c'ash with Saudi party most improbable and it is the only immediate step I can recommend to hearten our supporters. Baird reports that there is no place saving Buraimi oasis however near enough to it to be effective where levies could be maintained.

2. I have been considering possibility of arranging an air reconnaissance over Hamasah but this might be interpreted as a military threat though I might recommend it if specifically requested by the Sultan. I suggest however that if the help of levies is approved party should have air escort in final stages of its journey and that opportunity should be taken of observing Saudi dispositions at Hamasah.

EA 1084/59

(2)

DAILY PATROLS IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD OF BURAIMI*Foreign Office to Sir Rupert Hay*(No. 577. Confidential)
(Telegraphic)*Foreign Office,
September 11, 1952.*

Your telegram No. 466 [of September 8: Saudi Arabian Frontier Dispute. Buraimi incursion].

You will see from my telegram No. 428 to Jedda the action being taken with the Saudi Government. I shall consider further action in the light of the Saudi reply. Meanwhile you should not risk a clash with the Saudis in Buraimi by action with the Trucial Oman Levies. If you think it helpful, the levies may carry out daily patrols in neighbouring areas but should not enter Buraimi or any other part of the disputed area without further instructions.

2. Zaid may be assured that Her Majesty's Government will look to the interests of Abu Dhabi State.

3. Reference your telegram No. 461, I agree that the Sultan [of Muscat] need not be consulted regarding the terms of our Note to the Saudis but he should be kept continuously informed of the action being taken by Her Majesty's Government on his behalf. Unless you see objection the opportunity should be taken to impress on the Sultan the need to assert his authority in that area of Buraimi subject to his sovereignty. He should reach a practical agreement with the tribal leaders in that area to determine his future relations with them and to enable Petroleum Concessions Limited to operate concessions in that area and so remove the temptation for the tribes of the Saudi advances.

EA 1084/62

(3)

ASSISTANCE FOR ZAID*Mr. Laver to Mr. Eden. (Received September 11)*(No. 471. Confidential)
(Telegraphic)*Bahrain,
September 11, 1952.*

Following received from Political Resident, Persian Gulf, on tour at Sharjah.
My telegram No. 466.
Following from Hay.
I saw Zaid at Sharjah September 10. He was most depressed when I told him that I had not yet been authorised to despatch levies to Al Muaiqi. He said that his tribesmen were deserting him and asked us to let him know if we intended to abandon him, in order that he might direct his course accordingly. He is waiting in Sharjah for further word from us until evening of September 11.
I earnestly hope that it will be possible for Weir to inform him by then that we are sending levies to his assistance. In default of this I fear that he will abandon the struggle.

EA 1084/62

(4)

R.A.F. AIRCRAFT FOR SHARJAH*Foreign Office to Sir Rupert Hay*(No. 579. Confidential)
(Telegraphic)*Foreign Office,
September 12, 1952.*

Your telegram No. 471 [of September 11: Buraimi].
If you think it desirable you may arrange with the senior Royal Air Force officer, Persian Gulf, for R.A.F. aircraft to visit Sharjah and to remain there until the situation clarifies.
2. You should assure Zaid of Her Majesty's Government's support in safeguarding the rights of Abu Dhabi and should inform him of my protest to the Saudis.
3. For the present neither the Levies nor the aircraft should approach Buraimi but I have no objection to patrolling by the Levies up to the boundary of the restricted area.

EA 1084/67

No. 12

AIR RECONNAISSANCE OVER BURAIMI*Mr. Laver to Mr. Eden. (Received September 12)*(No. 475. Confidential)
(Telegraphic)*Bahrain,
September 12, 1952.*

Following received from Political Resident Persian Gulf on board the s.s. *Wild Goose*.
Your telegram No. [grp. undec.]
I am willing to recommend to Foreign Office Air Reconnaissance over countries from Buraimi to Ibbri dropping messages provided they are addressed to tribesmen by Sultan. Please telegraph text of any message which Sultan would wish to send to tribesmen in this manner.
2. I doubt if the bombing of Hamasah is a practical proposition much as I should like to see it done but I will leave it to the Foreign Office to comment.
3. I am disappointed at Sultan's attitude towards Saqr Naimi. Please endeavour to induce him to send a more personal message through Political Officer at Trucial Coast. It would also help if he could send personal message to Zaid.
4. According to gossip in Trucial Coast Suleiman Bin Hamyar is about to make his submission to Turki. Have you any confirmation.

EA 1084/68

No. 13

PROMISE BY TURKI OF SOCIAL IMPROVEMENTS*Mr. Laver to Mr. Eden. (Received September 13)*(No. 477. Confidential)
(Telegraphic)*Bahrain,
September 13, 1952.*

Addressed to Bahrain telegram No. 84 repeated for information to Muscat Jedda.
Foreign Office telegram No. 578 to you: paragraph 3.
I suggest that levies advance from present [gp omitted] at Yadan to Shirm, headquarters of Abdullah Salim Kaabi, if [grp. undec.] restricted area [grp. undec.] including Buraimi does not extend there also. Sultan's permission might be thought necessary. My telegram No. 76. Consider no purpose would be served by patrolling in uninhabited desert area.
2. I am written [sic] Zaid as instructed, but fear his attitude will remain as reported in my telegram No. 80 third sentence.
3. Turki in address to inhabitants has said he has been sent by the King to improve their conditions, and will spend 4 million riyals on agricultural developments but that oil operations are not contemplated. In this connexion Nasir bin Obaid Jumah returned from Saudi Arabia four days ago with story that party of several hundred left for Hamasah September 6 accompanied by Aramco engineer who will drill water wells.
4. Bahrain pass to Political Resident on s.s. *Wild Goose* [grp. undec.] now on tour. Will doubtless comment on paragraph 1.

EA 1084/73

No. 14

TRIBE'S EXPRESSIONS OF LOYALTY TO THE SULTAN*Her Majesty's Consul-General to Mr. Eden. (Received September 13)*(No. 90. Confidential)
(Telegraphic)*Muscat,
September 13, 1952.*

Your telegram No. 125 to me.
Please also see my telegram No. 201.
Sultan confirms he has sent encouraging personal letters to Saqr and Hazza, brothers of Zaid, replying to their letters direct. Nothing more known of Suleiman Hamyar at present. Further messages have come in from other tribes expressing concern and loyalty including Beni Ghafri of Dhahirah. Sultan's messages for certain Sheikhs follow in my cabled three telegrams in code repeated to Sharjah. They may be amended as desired and should be in Arabic.

2. I explained that the Foreign Office may not agree to aircraft dropping them, especially with respect to Buraimi Sheikhs, at least until the Saudi reply to the protest is known. If so, perhaps those to Saqr and Zaid can be sent by the Political Officer of the Trucial Coast.

The Sultan is pressing for information of Her Majesty's Government's attitude should the Saudi's interfere in his move to assert himself in Buraimi and Dhahirah; Turki has given out that the Sheikhs declaring for them will come under Saudi protection.

3. We appear to have nothing to show how, if at all, the Sultan is affected by the 1951 London Agreement and presume that he is not, or instructions to urge him to assert authority (vide Foreign Office telegram No. 577 to you) would not have been given. To this end he says there is no alternative to him taking steps to occupy Sultanabad with which he is concerned, that is to say territory determining the security of the Omani Sheikhs who have written him letters recognising him, and of which he supplied you with copies last year. All of this he can and will do forthwith subject to favourable reply about Her Majesty's Government's attitude.

4. He asks me to thank you for your co-operation and to stress the fact that everyone is pressing to know what he is going to do and that tribal people understand only what they see, and the matter is now very urgent.

Bin Jiluwi has evidently written to most of the Sheikhs of Dhahirah as well as Buraimi and Ali Bin Said Ghafri [grp. undec.]. Dariz has sent the Sultan the original received by him for instructions, and others mention similar letters.

APPEAL BY ZAID FOR ASSISTANCE*The Political Officer to Mr. Eden. (Received September 15)*

(No. 8.)

Sharjah,

(Telegraphic)

September 15, 1952.

Messenger from Zaid arrived today with letter appealing for immediate answer as to whether he is to receive help or not in view of the rapidly deteriorating situation.

He enclosed letter from Shud bin Jiluwi to Sheikh Dhawahir [grp. undec.] Beni-yas in Jimi Village, claiming them as Saudi subjects and promising gifts from Turki.

Many of Saqr's followers have now left him, and all pro-Saudi Sheikhs have, at Turki's request, declared in writing they will have no further truck with him. Rakkadh of Awnsir has called, also Abdullah Salim Kaabi. Latter probably recoverable.

2. Messenger says report of 500 reinforcements having left Hasa for Hamasah is confirmed by Saudis. He adds that approximately 2,100 bedouins are now gathered in Hamasah.

3. We propose leaving this evening with 40 Levies. Baird hopes that we shall be able to return tomorrow afternoon after brief consultation with Zaid, and not spend day as proposed in my letter sent to you by returning R.A.F. aircraft.

Route must pass through Obaid bin Jumaa post at Mahadha but do not anticipate obstruction. We shall bypass Hamasah but I propose on the return from Muweijdi to visit Saqr in Buraimi.

DEFINITION OF BURAIMI AREA*Sir R. Hay to Mr. Eden. (Received September 15)*

(No. 484. Confidential)

Bahrain,

(Telegraphic)

September 15, 1952.

Your telegram No. 588 (not repeated to Jeddah).

I welcome definition of Buraimi area given in paragraph 1, though I think Saudis would regard it as including adjoining tribal territory.

2. I take it from paragraph 3, reading with paragraph 1, that Sultan can only be assured of Her Majesty's Government's support in respect of his two villages (Buraimi and Hamasah) in oasis. From my reading of Muscat telegram No. 202 to me it appears that he requires an assurance of support, not only diplomatic but also military, if his attempts to establish himself in adjoining tribal territory bring him into collision with Saudis.

Please telegraph what should be said to him on this subject.

UNITED KINGDOM DEMAND FOR THE WITHDRAWAL OF TURKI'S FORCES*Mr. Riches to Mr. Eden. (Received September 18)*

(No. 240. Confidential)

Jedda,

(Telegraphic)

September 18, 1952.

My immediately preceding telegram.

Although Saudi Note gives no specific reply to our demand for withdrawal of Turki, Yusuf stated, in handing it to me, that the reply was implicit in it and in the King's remark quoted in paragraph 3 of my telegram from Riyadh. It thus amounts to refusal to withdraw Turki, and the threat to go to United Nations if we use force.

2. The basis of Saudi's stand is the King's inflexible stubbornness in regard to his ancestral rights and their denial of our right to protest as they have never agreed to restrict their activities in the Buraimi area where they do not recognise the claim of Abu Dhabi or Muscat.

3. I think references to United Nations have been forced out of Saudis by their surprise at the strength and urgency of our protest at Turki's moves. I do not believe the King would take the case to the United Nations of his own volition. But Yusuf who originated the idea and others around the King will make use of the threat to the utmost to keep us from ousting Turki from Buraimi and might even in an extremity persuade the King to implement it.

4. In these circumstances and in view of the Saudi contention that Buraimi is outside the London Agreement, the best course would appear from here to be to make every effort with the aid of levies and without actually clashing with Turki to hold our position at Buraimi "at the request of the people" (my telegram No. 229). Meanwhile, urgent consideration should be given to fresh proposals about the whole frontier dispute which I consider it essential Her Majesty's Ambassador should bring with him on his return to Jedda.

(2)

Foreign Office to Sir Rupert Hay

(No. 611. Confidential)

Foreign Office,

(Telegraphic)

September 18, 1952.

Jedda telegram No. 240 to me [of September 17: Buraimi].

You may now authorise levies to move into that part of Buraimi which is indisputably the property of Abu Dhabi but you should take all steps possible to avoid any clash with Saudi party.

(3)

Sir R. Hay to Mr. Eden. (Received September 20)

(No. 504. Confidential)

Bahrain,

(Telegraphic)

September 20, 1952.

Your telegram No. 611: Buraimi.

Column of 6 vehicles and 30 levies leave for Buraimi this evening with Baird and Weir.

REPORT ON DISCUSSIONS WITH THE SAUDIS CONCERNING THE MOVEMENT OF TURKI INTO BURAIMI*Mr. Riches to Mr. Eden. (Received September 26)*

(No. 106. Confidential)

Jedda,

Sir,

September 17, 1952.

With reference to my telegram No. 240 of the 17th September, 1952, I have the honour to report on some details of my discussions in Riyadh on the 15th-17th September, 1952, with King Ibn Saud and Sheikh Yusuf Yasin about the movement of the Saudi Amir Turki bin Ataishan into Buraimi.

2. I left Jedda accompanied by Mr. Scott at 4 a.m. on the 15th September arriving in Riyadh at about eight o'clock. We were met by Sheikh Yusuf Yasin and informed that King Ibn Saud would receive me at his morning audience. The Note which I had handed in to the Saudi Foreign Ministry in Jedda on the evening of the 14th September was sent to Riyadh by the aircraft on which I travelled so that both the King and Sheikh Yusuf were aware of its contents and also of the oral communications accompanying it before I saw His Majesty. I for my part had had some indication of the Saudi attitude in that Sheikh Yusuf said to me at once that the London Agreement did not apply to Buraimi and that moreover Her Majesty's Government themselves had sent an official there and had claimed that they were within their rights. I replied that on the contrary the agreement certainly applied to Buraimi and that Turki's movement was a military expedition while Mr. Wilton had gone as a civilian official to perform administrative duties—and action of the kind expressly reserved at the London Conference.

3. My audience with the King at which Sheikhs Yusuf Yasin and Khalid El Qarqani were present lasted forty-five minutes, but only revealed the King's obsession with his "ancestral rights". His Majesty appeared very tired and after an initial silence spoke on a highly querulous note which only finally subsided towards the end of the audience when he good-humouredly held my hand and talked in his usual vein of his friendship for Britain.

4. His Majesty showed no awareness of the importance attached by Her Majesty's Government to the observance of the London Agreement, or even of the very existence of the Agreement. It has probably been represented to him as an agreement by Her Majesty's Government alone to circumscribe the movements of the Trucial Levies. Although I made

continuous efforts to bring the conversation back to the two essential bases of the protest of Her Majesty's Government—the breach of the London Agreement and the inclusion of Buraimi in the Anglo-Saudi frontier discussions—His Majesty ignored the one and dismissed the other with emphatic references to his rights in his ancestral lands. As one example of the latter he declared that Buraimi was his territory. His Amir there had died so he had sent another (Yusuf later admitted to me that this was imaginary). Buraimi was his country and he would never give up the land of his ancestors and grandfathers before him. If force was used—well, his head could be cut off. He could take the matter (here he stumbled a bit and looked at Yusuf) to the United Nations. He then suddenly reverted to his natural manner and said that it was preferable to settle matters direct as between old friends. We should get together and settle matters in five minutes. He was ready for discussion at once—in Riyadh or anywhere.

5. Again I brought His Majesty back to the point at issue and referred to the necessity for the withdrawal of Turki. Again His Majesty wandered off dilating on his ancestral lands. He became excited and his remarks wholly irrelevant. He declared among other things that the people of Kuwait were his people—he had only to say the word and they would come to him. The British Government appeared to be encouraging his enemies—there was the Regent Abdulillah in the Gulf. I assured His Majesty of the complete innocence of Her Majesty's Government and their continued friendship towards him. He then developed this theme in his usual manner and the audience ended pleasantly after I had said that I would take advantage of His Majesty's suggestion that I should discuss matters with Yusuf Yasin and then see him again. In fact, however, his intransigence suggested that there would be nothing to be gained from a second audience and the remainder of my talks were in fact conducted with Yusuf Yasin and Khalid El Qarqani alone.

6. My conversations with Yusef and Khalid which took place at various times on the 15th and 16th September centred on three main points. The meaning of the London Agreement, the dispute as to whether or not Buraimi was a subject of discussion at the Anglo-Saudi Conference on frontiers, and the significance of the oral communication which I made on the instructions contained in your telegram No. 431 of the 13th September, 1952.

7. As regards the 1951 London Agreement Yusuf said that the Saudi Government were very concerned at the suggestion that they had contravened an agreement. Here was the text of the London Agreement. It clearly referred to "Oman troops" only. I cited the remark of the Amir Faisal at the tenth session of the London Conference and said that the decisions of the Conference were not wholly enshrined in the résumé; the minutes of the meetings had to be studied and included. From them it was clearly the intention of both sides that the restriction on the movement of armed forces should apply to troops on both sides. The term "Levies" was only used in the final résumé because the Saudi side had made such a fuss about them. The Agreement was based on the foundation that the restrictions applied to both sides. Moreover the Amir Faisal's first draft (which at a British request was changed—though verbally only) obviously included troops of both sides. It was not believable that the British side should have agreed to restrictions on movements of the levies when Saudi troops were to be free to move at will.

8. Yusuf and Khalid reverted again and again to the fact that text of the final résumé was all that they could recognise. Many proposals had been put forward and withdrawn in the course of the Conference. The exact text of the agreed points was all that could be taken as definitive. I replied that Her Majesty's Government maintained their position as stated in the note.

9. Yusuf said that Buraimi was not an area about which the British Government could speak. It did not belong to either Abu Dhabi or Muscat. The question of Buraimi was a matter between the Saudi Government and the people of Buraimi and no one else. He said that the history of the matter was that before the Saudi Government suggested that there should be a Frontier Commission the position of Buraimi had been raised and at that time the Saudi Government had refused to discuss it. Finally, on British insistence, they had agreed that the two Governments should jointly ascertain the existing state of affairs there, i.e. a "constatation des faits." Eventually the idea of a Commission was shelved and the question of Buraimi left on one side. At the London and Dammam Conferences Buraimi was not discussed. He, Yusuf, knew this for a fact as he had been present at both Conferences. The Saudi Government regarded Buraimi as outside the scope of its boundary dispute with Her Majesty's Government. The Saudis had a perfect right to come and go there. Previously, although they had had the right to send people there they had refrained because they thought it best not to do so. But when Her Majesty's Government sent an official and the people of Buraimi protested to King Ibn Saud and he to the British Government, and when the latter rejected the protest the Saudi Government had to cover its position. Finally, Yusuf expressed the view that this was the first time that we had claimed any part of Buraimi for Muscat.

10. I told Yusuf that we regarded Buraimi as belonging partly to Abu Dhabi and partly to Muscat and that however much or little was said about Buraimi at the two Conferences the latter were about the frontiers of Abu Dhabi without any denial and the Saudi Government well knew and had always known of Abu Dhabi's position in Buraimi. I then referred him to the exchange of messages which took place between the Saudi and British Governments

earlier this year following the visit of Mr. Wilton to Buraimi and emphasised that this showed that the area was in dispute. In particular the expression in the message contained in your telegram No. 180 of the 7th April; "moreover the continuation of these duties even in the disputed areas was expressly reserved at the London Conference . . ." showed that this was the view of the British Government. If the Saudi Government had not shared this view then their proper course would have been to send another message saying so and at least to consult Her Majesty's Government before sending an official to the area, let alone the present military expedition. Later, in an attempt to induce some doubts in Yusuf's mind regarding the United Nations I emphasised that a re-reading of the exchange of messages convinced me that any impartial study of their wording would lead to the conclusion that Buraimi was a matter of dispute between the two Governments and covered by the frontier negotiations.

11. As regards the warning that Her Majesty's Government would have to protect their position Yusuf began by describing this as a threat and as a very serious and disturbing matter. I replied that it was no threat but a statement of fact. The position of Her Majesty's Government was stated in the note. In their view the move of Turki had altered the situation in Buraimi and Her Majesty's Government naturally had to protect their position and that of their protégés. Yusuf attempted to persuade me to specify what action was intended by Her Majesty's Government but I refused to be drawn. He then said that, as the King had declared, if we wanted to use force he was ready to have his head cut off. In the event of the use of force it might be necessary to take the matter to the Security Council. The Interpreter first rendered Yusuf's remark as "in the event of the threat of force" but this was corrected. Later Yusuf said that the Saudis might go to the Security Council "in the event of aggression".

12. Throughout the two days that these talks proceeded I continually impressed on Yusuf the seriousness with which Her Majesty's Government regarded the situation and the necessity for an early reply. At first he had hoped to have this ready for the King to hand to me on the evening of the 16th September but in the event the Saudis were unable to settle the draft in time while the King was indisposed on the morning of the 17th September and did not sit in his Majlis. If, on the assumption that his sickness would soon pass, I had waited until the evening to make a further appeal to him I should have missed the aeroplane to Jeddah and thus further and considerably delayed the despatch of the reports to you. Moreover I did not feel that a further appeal to the King to alter the arguments and position of the Saudi Government as expounded by Yusuf Yasin would have led to any result other than further to irritate His Majesty and confirm him in his resolve to give up nothing of his ancestral lands. I therefore thought it best to concentrate on putting him in as good a frame of mind as possible in case of our having to take serious action in Buraimi, and accordingly sent him a message reaffirming Anglo-Saudi friendship and expressing the hope that this very serious matter would be settled. I also asked Sheikh Yusuf to inform His Majesty that I had received instructions to convey an invitation to him to appoint a representative to attend Her Majesty's Coronation and that I regretted that I was unable to inform His Majesty of this in person.

13. Sheikh Yusuf handed the Saudi note to me at 10.15 a.m. I at once observed that the note did not in fact reply to my note as it gave no answer to the request of Her Majesty's Government that Turki should be withdrawn at once. Yusuf replied that the answer was implicit in the note and was also contained in the King's remarks that he had a perfect right to send his men to Buraimi which was his territory. All the points in the British note were answered in these two communications.

14. I returned to Jeddah in the evening of the 17th September.

15. I am sending copies of this despatch to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Washington and the Head of the British Middle East Office at Fayid and three copies to the Political Resident at Bahrein two of which are for forwarding to Muscat and Sharjah respectively.

I have &c.

D. M. H. RICHES.

Enclosure No. 1

Text of Note handed by Her Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires to King Ibn Saud on the 15th September, 1952

Jedda,

September 14, 1952.

It has been reported to Her Majesty's Government that Turki Bin Ataishan accompanied by 40 Fidawis (armed retainers) has entered the Hamasah village of Buraimi. As the Saudi Arabian Government well knows Buraimi forms part of the area covered by the 1951 London Agreement. The area concerned was defined as being the area which would be the subject of discussion at the Conference which was to take place in the autumn of that year but which was held at Dammam last February. The Amir Faisal at the tenth session of the discussions held in London in August, 1951, stated that in this area the Saudi Arabian Government would stop their activities also. When the Dammam Conference was adjourned on the 14th February both sides agreed that pending the resumption of negotiations the restrictions referred to in the London Agreement would continue to be observed by both parties.

Her Majesty's Government must accordingly protest to the Saudi Arabian Government and express their concern at this contravention by the Saudi Government of the terms of the 1951 London Agreement which Her Majesty's Government have themselves been most careful to observe.

As part of Buraimi territory lies within the Sultanate of Muscat His Highness the Sultan has asked that Her Majesty's Government should act in this matter on his behalf in representing the case to the Saudi Arabian Government. Her Majesty's Government accordingly make this protest on behalf of His Highness the Sultan as well as on their own behalf. Her Majesty's Government request that the Saudi Arabian Government will arrange for the immediate withdrawal of Turki Bin Ataishan and of all his followers from the whole area subject to the 1951 London Agreement.

Enclosure No. 2

Translation of Note from Saudi Arabian Government handed by Saudi Arabian Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs to Her Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at 0715 hours G.M.T. on the 17th September, 1952 in Riyadh

*Riyadh 28 Zuel Huja, 1371.
September 17, 1952.*

The Saudi Arabian Government has never at any time regarded it as possible that Buraimi should be a subject on which negotiations between her and the British Government could take place for the following reasons:—

- (a) None of the Sheikhs of the Oman Coast has any authority in fact or by right in Buraimi and it follows that it is not for the British Government to oppose the actions of the Saudi Arabian Government in Buraimi because it is a matter which concerns only the Saudi Arabian Government and the people of Buraimi themselves.
- (b) The documents sent by the British Government to His Majesty King Abdul Aziz after the Treaty of Jeddah do not mention any of the Sheikhs of Buraimi as being bound by an agreement with the British Government.
- (c) The relationship and connections of Buraimi with His Majesty himself and his fathers and ancestors before him were and still are continuous.
- (d) Once only, and on the insistence of the British Government and after the Saudi Arabian Government had denied any competence of the Sultan of Muscat to discuss the lands south of Buraimi and any concern of the Sheikh of Abu Dhabi in Buraimi, and as proof of her desire to facilitate matters and her good intentions, did the Saudi Arabian Government agree to the Commission which was suggested to discuss the actual situation in Buraimi and in the other areas. The Commission was not set up and the matter was left on one side.
- (e) No mention of Buraimi occurred during the London discussions because it was no concern of the British Government. Consequently the name of Buraimi was not mentioned in the Dammam Conference and it was not referred to in any way whatsoever. Thus the question of Buraimi was regarded as the concern of the Saudi Arabian Government alone with the people of Buraimi themselves.

2. In spite of that the British Government sent Mr. Wilton to Buraimi. This aroused the anger of the people of Buraimi and they complained strongly to His Majesty King Abdul Aziz, a matter which obliged him to inform them that he did not recognise and would not recognise the Sovereignty of any of the Sheikhs of the Oman Coast over them. The only reply of the British Government to this was the answer of Mr. Pelham, the British Ambassador, stating that the British Government did not accept the loyalty of the people of Buraimi to His Majesty King Abdul Aziz, or any right of His Majesty to sovereignty over them. The British Government protested and considered the actions of the Saudi Arabian Government as improper and stated that they could not agree to any restrictions on the activities of British officials in the course of their administrative duties. The Saudi Government did not expect such a reply from a friendly Government denying the right of His Majesty in such a way.

3. Hence it is clear that the British Government assumed for themselves a right which they had never claimed before, and denied to the Saudi Arabian Government her clear undoubted right.

4. In the Note Verbale presented by Mr. Riches to His Majesty the King on the 15th September, 1952 the Saudi Arabian Government learned for the first time that the Sultan of Muscat claims that part of Buraimi territory lies within his authority. These claims have never been mentioned before.

5. In the Note Verbale referred to, which Mr. Riches presented to His Majesty the King, the British Government states "As the Saudi Arabian Government knows, Buraimi forms part of the area covered by the 1951 London Agreement. The area concerned was defined as being the area which would be the subject of discussion at the Conference which was to take place in the autumn of that year but which in fact was held last February". The Note continues:— "His Royal Highness the Emir Faisal at the tenth session of the discussions held in London in August, 1951, stated that in this area the Saudi Arabian Government

would stop their activities too. When the Dammam Conference was adjourned on the 14th February, 1952, both sides agreed that pending the resumption of negotiations the restrictions referred to in the London Agreement would continue to be observed by both sides". This was stated in the Note Verbale which Mr. Riches presented. In fact what was agreed in the London conversations and reaffirmed at the Dammam meeting was as follows:—

"Paragraph 1(b) of what was agreed in London—The two parties are agreed that until the Conference which will be held in the coming winter, the movements and activities of representatives of oil companies on both sides and also the movements and activities of the Oman forces will be confined to areas outside those which will be the subject of discussion at the Conference. This was agreed by both sides without prejudice to their rights in the areas which will be the subject of discussion".

From this it is evident that the presence of Saudi officials in Buraimi does not in any way violate what was agreed in London.

The Saudi Arabian Government is much distressed to see the severity of the demands of the British Government at a time when she has been and continues to be prepared to solve the boundary problems in a friendly fashion as she is accustomed to solve problems between her and the friendly British Government. The Saudi Arabian Government also deeply regrets to hear Mr. Riches's oral remarks, namely that the British Government ask for an urgent and favourable reply because if Turki bin Ataishan is not withdrawn as requested Her Majesty's Government will be compelled to take such action as they consider necessary to protect their position. Such a statement does not accord with the friendship existing between the two countries, nor does it accord with the principles of the United Nations. The Saudi Arabian Government did not expect such a statement to be made by the friendly British Government. The history of the friendly relations between the countries is too well known and too strong to be referred to in this Note. Furthermore the two countries are members of a world organisation which requires the solution of territorial problems by peaceful means. The Saudi Arabian Government is entirely ready to solve these problems in accordance with the requirements of friendship on the principles of the United Nations.

EA 1084/73

No. 19

(1)

SAUDI INCURSION IN BURAIMI

Foreign Office to Bahrain

(No. 588. Confidential)

Foreign Office,

(Telegraphic)

September 13, 1952.

Muscat telegram to Bahrain No. 202 of September 13.

Reference paragraph 3. The 1951 London Agreement applies also to the Sultan of Muscat as Her Majesty's Government were acting on his behalf during the negotiations. The Sultan is however only restricted in the Buraimi area of his territory. Buraimi boundaries were not defined during negotiations here but may be taken as area in the immediate vicinity of the eight main Buraimi villages near Hamasah.

2. The Sultan is free to act in Muscat territory outside the foregoing area.

3. I will determine future action in the light of the Saudi reply but the Sultan, whose attitude is encouraging, may be assured of the support of Her Majesty's Government in areas subject to the frontier dispute.

4. Sharm mentioned in Sharjah telegram to Bahrain No. 84 appears to lie outside the main restricted area and levies would not therefore be precluded from operating there.

5. Please repeat all telegrams on this subject to Memin Fayid.

EA 1084/95

(2)

Sir R. Hay to Mr. Eden. (Received September 18)

(No. 491. Confidential)

Bahrain,

(Telegraphic)

September 18, 1952.

Following is gist of Sharjah telegram No. 88 which has not been repeated in full to Muscat and Jeddah.

Weir and Baird returned to Sharjah on the 17th September after spending the 16th September at Buraimi. They saw Zaid and Saqr Naimi. Messengers from the Sultan had reached the former. Visit had good effect, especially on Saqr, but disappointment was expressed that the levies, who remained two miles from Buraimi, were not staying.

2. Two Saudi cars arrived at Hamasah 15th September and twelve more are here, on their way with reinforcements. Saqr says that fifty of his men have gone over and received nationality certificates which all [grp. undec.]ers have to sign before receiving money. Turki has now twelve prominent local Sheikhs with him. Abdullah Bin Salim of Bani Kaab has joined him. He informed Saqr he had done so because of the failure of his approach to Her Majesty's Government and the Sultan.

3. Saqr said he would welcome the forces from Muscat but emphasised the necessity of speed.

4. Owing to the defection of Abdullah Bin Salim it is no longer possible to send levies to Sharr (cf. paragraph 4 of your telegram No. 588). In these circumstances Zaid's village Mulogqi is the only place where their presence would be effective. Weir reports that the Saudis do not move out of Hamasah, and considers the risk of a clash negligible. Appearance of the levies in the vicinity of Buraimi is said to have caused the Saudis considerable alarm.

EA 1084/95

No. 20

TRUCIAL STATES PASSPORT REGULATIONS

Foreign Office to Sir Rupert Hay

(No. 615. Confidential)
(Telegraphic)

*Foreign Office,
September 19, 1952.*

Your telegram No. 491 [of September 18: Buraimi].

I hope that Trucial States Passport Regulations authorised in my telegram No. 591 [of September 15] are now in force and can be used to prevent further passage of Saudi reinforcements to Buraimi through the Trucial States (reference paragraph 2 of your telegram under reference).

2. You will no doubt take any steps possible to bring home to the Sultan of Muscat the need for energetic measures to consolidate his own territory and to retain the allegiance of his own tribes. The present unfortunate situation in Buraimi is a result of his short-sighted attitude in obstructing the Iraq Petroleum Company in their desire to negotiate agreements with those very Shaikhs of Buraimi who have now seceded from his allegiance to that of Ibn Saud. The Sultan must now act with great speed if he is to save his position in Central Oman.

EA 1084/98

No. 21

R.A.F. RECONNAISSANCE FLIGHTS OVER BURAIMI

Sir R. Hay to Mr. Eden. (Received September 19)

(No. 497. Confidential)
(Telegraphic)

*Bahrain,
September 19, 1952.*

My telegram No. 488.

On September 17, 3 Vampires flew to Sharjah via Dohah and Abu Dhabi. After refuelling they flew over Buraimi. Six tents and a number of vehicles observed at Hamasah.

2. On September 18 [? group omitted] Valetta and one Vampire flew over Dariz and Yanqul and dropped Sultan's messages. On return they circled over Buraimi oasis and took photographs. Another V. reconnoitred exactly up to 100 miles west of Buraimi and saw no signs of Saudi reinforcements.

EA 1084/140

No. 22

PROTEST AGAINST THE FLIGHT OF R.A.F. PLANES OVER BURAIMI

Note from the Saudi Arabian Ministry of Foreign Affairs

September 19, 1952.

The Saudi Arabian Government have learnt that three British aircraft flew over the houses of the people of Buraimi at a very low height which angered the people of Buraimi and all the Bedouin Arabs and their chiefs assembled there. Had it not been for the good sense of the Saudi official who endeavoured to maintain calm something unexpected might have taken place.

The Saudi Government protest strongly to the British Government at the coming of these aircraft to Buraimi and requests that they be forbidden to return because this is an act of aggression against the sovereignty of the Saudi Government and in addition to being contrary to the principles of the friendship between the Saudi Arabian Government and the British Government it is inconsistent with the principles of the United Nations.

It is a matter of regret to the Saudi Government that the friendship which has endured for long years between her and the British Government should come to this degree of aggression on the part of the British Government against the Saudi Arabian Government. The Saudi Arabian Government sincerely hope in the interest of "the preservation of the friendship between the two countries" that this flagrant aggression be stopped. Otherwise the Saudi Arabian Government will be obliged in defence of its rights to take the matter to the Security Council considering that such an act threatens peace and security and is contrary to the principles of the United Nations.

Her Majesty's Embassy's acknowledgment of the Saudi Arabian Ministry of Foreign Affairs Note

(No. 281)

*Jedda,
September 20, 1952.*

Her Majesty's Embassy at Jedda present their compliments to the Saudi Arabian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and have the honour to acknowledge receipt of the respected Ministry's Note No. 1/1/10/1251 of the 19th September, 1952 the contents of which will be transmitted to Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom.

Her Majesty's Embassy take this opportunity of renewing to the Saudi Arabian Ministry of Foreign Affairs the assurance of their high consideration.

EA 1084/112

No. 23

UNITED KINGDOM DIPLOMATIC SUPPORT FOR THE SULTAN

Mr. Chauncy to Mr. Eden. (Received September 22)

(No. 99. Confidential)
(Telegraphic)

*Muscat,
September 22, 1952.*

The Sultan asked urgently to see me this morning. He has received letter from the Imam forwarding the usual letter received from Bin Jiluwi announcing Turki's arrival and asking the Imam to help him. The Imam has written to all tribal leaders warning them against the Nejdis and foreigners, naming the Americans, perhaps remembering Doctor Thom's last year's visit to Sulaiman Bin Hamyar and others. He asks the Sultan to decide and let him know what to do. This is the approval the Sultan deemed essential and has been awaiting, and he now urgently wants the rep'y to his request for advice and assistance made to Her Majesty's Government.

2. I explained to him that I judged the position to be that, whilst Her Majesty's Government could assure the Sultan of diplomatic support they would be putting themselves in the wrong if they promised military assistance, and could perhaps be taken before the United Nations Security Council for offering or promising military assistance to settle a dispute in which they were not themselves concerned. Similarly if the Saudi Arabian Government sought to interfere militarily in tribal disputes between the Buraimi and other Omani tribes they would be putting themselves in the wrong. Thus at this stage the Sultan must take his courage in his hands and decide to do what was right and necessary to assert his authority in his territories, and trust to diplomatic means for the rest.

3. The Sultan reacted unexpectedly favourably to this. He is undoubtedly nervous of what might happen if the Saudis' military strength is used against him, but is resolved to try to do what he believes right now that he has tribal support, and will not press for any advance assurance of Her Majesty's Government's military assistance. He presumes that he can count on the co-operation of Abu Dhabi, but wants this confirmed. Also that he is no longer restricted from action in the Buraimi area. His suggestion [? grp. omitted] to march on Buraimi in three columns, and for the Imam to send forces to Ibri to deal with Dhahirah if necessary, and to support him in Buraimi if required later. Sulaiman Bin Hamyar, who has hitherto been trying to keep Imam neutral, has been warned to keep quiet and not to go to Buraimi. The Sultan expects that the tribes will submit as they approach, but if they resist he will have to shell Hamasah with artillery detachment of Muscat infantry, and occupy it. [Grp. omitted] he wants confirmation that he is in no way restricted. If he is, as I anticipated, he declares that there is nothing he can do, as that is the centre of defiance. In fact it is the only place so far where his authority is actually challenged and at which he can justifiably strike, which is what is demanded of him locally.

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4. He therefore wants very urgent confirmation now, so that he can inform the Imam and others:—

- (a) that his protest to the Saudi Arabian Government has failed,
- (b) that he is urged by Her Majesty's Government to assert his authority and will get their diplomatic support,
- (c) that he is not now restricted in any way by the London or other agreements, of which he has no information. As [grp. undec. ? on receipt of] this, he will move as quickly as possible. I gather his columns will be led by Ahmad Ibrahim in vans, a tribal leader with one of his brothers, and himself in reserve with artillery. It will probably take ten and all of twelve days to get properly going, but he must [grp. undec.] get his reply to the Imam and others at once and has detained messengers for the purpose.

EA 1084/113

No. 24

POSSIBLE REQUEST TO TURKI TO LEAVE THE SULTAN'S TERRITORY

Sir R. Hay to Mr. Eden. (Received September 23)

(No. 514. Confidential)
(Telegraphic)

Bahrain,
September 23, 1952.

Muscat telegrams Nos. 221 and 223 to me which may [grp. undec.] be repeated to Jedda and British Middle East Office (Fayid).

I am still awaiting reply to paragraph 1 of my telegram No. 501 to you. If my presumption is confirmed, I recommend approval should be given to the proposal contained in paragraph 4 of first telegram.

2. Reference telegram No. 223, I suggest we advise the Sultan to send Turki a written request to leave his territory, and if he fails to comply to use such force as may be necessary to compel him to do so.

EA 1084/141

No. 25

BRITISH FORCES ON THE OMAN COAST

Saudi Arabia Ministry of Foreign Affairs Note No. 1/1/10/52 of September 23, 1952

Jedda,
September 24, 1952.

British forces of the Oman Coast still continue their aggression against Saudi Arabian subjects and Saudi Arabia. On Sunday morning a force composed of three armoured jeeps, three pick-ups and one lorry carrying soldiers arrived at the village of El Ain where the soldiers descended; and British planes flew low over Buraimi.

The Saudi Government adds a new protest to its former one and considers this act as an aggressive act against Saudi Arabia threatening peace and security. The Saudi Government demands the cessation of this. She is prepared to solve the problem in peaceful ways as is required by friendship and by the principles of the United Nations.

Her Majesty's Embassy's acknowledgment of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Note of September 23, 1952

Her Majesty's Embassy at Jedda present their compliments to the Saudi Arabian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and have the honour to acknowledge receipt of the respected Ministry's Note No. 1/1/10/52 of the 23rd September, 1952, the contents of which will be transmitted to Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom.

Her Majesty's Embassy take this opportunity of renewing to the Saudi Arabian Ministry of Foreign Affairs the assurance of their high consideration.

EA 1084/113

PROPOSAL BY THE SULTAN TO ASSERT HIS AUTHORITY IN THE BURAIMI AREA

Foreign Office to Sir Rupert Hay

(No. 628. Confidential)
(Telegraphic)

Foreign Office,
September 25, 1952.

Your telegram No. 514 [of the 23rd September]: Buraimi.

Your paragraph 1. You will now have seen my telegram No. 622.

2. While it is encouraging that Sultan proposes energetic steps to assert his authority in Buraimi area he should be advised against firing on Saudi forces unless his own troops are attacked. Any unprovoked clash with Saudis would jeopardise his case if the matter is referred to the United Nations and would prejudice settlement of the whole frontier question.

3. It might be suggested to him that his best interests would be served by occupying Buraimi village itself and surrounding country which belongs to him, and then sending personal representative to Turki to discuss the situation and if possible induce him to withdraw.

4. The foregoing should qualify the advice given to the Sultan on points (b) and (d) in paragraph 2 of Muscat telegram No. 227 to you. I agree with point (c). As regards (a) I am not clear what Sultan means by asking if Abu Dhabi will co-operate. But I could not agree to Abu Dhabi tribesmen (still less Levies) entering the area of Buraimi claimed by Sultan.

EA 1084/117

No. 27

UNITED KINGDOM SUPPORT FOR THE SULTAN

Her Majesty's Consul-General to Mr. Eden. (Received September 24)

(No. 104. Confidential)
(Telegraphic)

Muscat,
September 24, 1952.

My telegrams Nos. 221 and 223.

The Sultan is pressing for immediate reply as messengers cannot be delayed longer and action by him is also very necessary.

2. Can I inform him at once

(a) Abu Dhabi will co-operate with him.

(b) He is advised by Her Majesty's Government to take whatever action he considers necessary to assert his authority in his territory including Buraimi and Hamasah.

(c) Her Majesty's Government will give him all diplomatic support possible in any consequent dispute with the Saudi Arabian Government.

(d) If Turki or followers do not withdraw it is for him to take such measures as may be necessary to place them outside his borders and prevent their return.

3. The Sultan has received information that his message dropped over Dariz was received safely.

EA 1084/115

No. 28

BURAIMI SITUATION : R.A.F. RECONNAISSANCE

Sir R. Hay to Mr. Eden. (Received September 23)

(No. 512. Confidential)
(Telegraphic)

Bahrain,
September 23, 1952.

Levies have been safely installed in Zaid's villages and Weir and Baird have returned to Sharjah. The Royal Air Force flew along the coast to Jabal Dhanna September 20 and reconnoitred over Buraimi September 22. No change reported there. *Wild Goose* visited Abu Dhabi September 19. The Ruler's son reported that he had sent twenty armed men to Marhiyah, which is in the disputed area south of Jabal Dhanna.

MUSCAT BOUNDARY IN THE BURAIMI AREA*Her Majesty's Consul-General to Mr. Eden. (Received September 25)*(No. 105. Confidential)
(Telegraphic)*Muscat,
September 25, 1952.*

Foreign Office telegram No. 628.

I have not received copy of your telegram No. 514 to Foreign Office.

2. The Sultan has now explained, as Abu Dhabi and Muscat territory have common undefined boundary in Buraimi area, he wants only general co-operation or liaison with Abu Dhabi. He is not asking for levies or tribal force but he will not be able to help it if individuals or parties come of their own accord. Apparently his intention is to link up with Saqr in Buraimi first and I am sure he will agree to refrain from firing, or other force, unless met with it. He certainly intends to try persuasion to start with.

3. May I now advise him to go ahead on basis of Foreign Office telegram under reference?

PROTEST AGAINST THE INCURSION OF TURKI'S FORCES*Her Majesty's Consul-General to Mr. Eden. (Received September 28)*(No. 106. Confidential)
(Telegraphic)*Muscat,
September 28, 1952.*

I have spoken to the Sultan and confirmed in writing that our protest on his behalf had not succeeded in securing the withdrawal of [grp. omitted? Turki] and followers and advising him as directed on the four points raised.

I also reminded him that as the incursion was solely in his territory he should not expect any military assistance from other sources.

2. The Sultan has replied in writing thanking Her Majesty's Government and regretting that the protest has not been successful. He confirms that he has no intention of firing upon Turki's party and every peaceful means to secure their withdrawal will be used. But he observes that they are armed and that it may be necessary to bombard Hamasah if Rashad bin Hamad and his followers refuse to submit to his authority. In that case every care will be taken to avoid hitting houses lodging Turki and party if they remain, whilst an ultimatum will be sent to him warning him that if he stays after the time fixed for the bombardment it will be at his own risk.

3. Whilst appreciating my frankness in explaining that he should not expect more than diplomatic support, and accepting the position, the Sultan assures that he does not wish to trouble Her Majesty's Government in small matters but recalls the assistance that he and his predecessors have come to expect, and invariably received, from Her Majesty's Government in the past in important matters. He is, therefore, resolved to do his utmost, dealing with the situation as it is with such resources as he commands and leaving it to the good judgment of Her Majesty's Government if Saudi intervention becomes too much for him.

4. He does expect, however, co-operation now from Her Majesty's Government and Abu Dhabi in preventing passage through the latter's territory of Saudi reinforcements or use of their territory for attack on his territories. Also, when the Saudi intruders have gone he will expect full co-operation from Abu Dhabi in dealing with their tribal affairs and invites attention [? grp. omitted] second part of my telegram No. 198 of September 9. He hopes for this co-operation in addition to what has [grp. undec.] explained in my telegram No. 230.

5. The Sultan's plans are now being executed and the rallying point is Sohar. The Minister of the Interior with the advance force is to proceed straight to Buraimi to join up with Saqr. He will send message for Saqr but is anxious that his plan should not become known to the Saudis and so it will not contain much. Can Weir get this explained to Saqr? There is no doubt at all about the determination behind the Sultan's plan, and the Imam and all the leading Sheikhs are being called upon to supply contingents including Sulaiman bin Hamyar. The Imam's column will, however, only go as far as Ibri and deal with the Baluchis and any others there and wait in reserve. The Sultan expects to have about 2,500 picked men at Sohar and 1,000 with Ahmad Ibrahim. The first act will be to cut Hamasah water supply and invite parley.

**PERSONAL MESSAGE FROM KING ABDUL AZIZ IBN SAUD
TO MR. EDEN***London,**September 29, 1952.*

It is indeed regrettable that the normal friendly relations between us and the Government of the United Kingdom should deteriorate to the extent of the use of British aircrafts and forces against us. It is more regrettable that this should happen in a Government headed by our friend Mr. Churchill and our friend Mr. Eden as its Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister.

It is our country and we have not attacked a British subject or British territory. The flying of British aircrafts and the use of forces over Braimy is considered an act of aggression against us. The resort to such acts was unnecessary when we could have settled the outstanding problems between us amicably and peacefully.

It is not in the interest of either party the spreading of the news in the Arab and Muslim world, that our relations have been strained to this extent. And valuing our friendship, we prevented taking any retaliatory measures against the British aircrafts and forces.

If Mr. Eden values to the continuance of the friendly relations between our countries, the United Kingdom Government should then put an end to these acts and prevent its agents in the Persian Gulf from pursuing such acts. Otherwise we are obliged to make public what has happened, resort to the Security Council, and defend our rights and country. We reluctantly may have to resort to these measures. But still we have hope in the goodwill of the United Kingdom Government and Mr. Eden.

We are confident that our differences can be settled in a friendly manner.

**POSSIBILITY OF THE BURAIMI DISPUTE COMING BEFORE THE
SECURITY COUNCIL***Sir O. Franks to Mr. Eden. (Received October 1)*(No. 1862. Confidential)
(Telegraphic)*Washington,
September 30, 1952.*

My telegram No. 1015 Saving: Buraimi.

The State Department asked us to call again today. They said that the Saudi Arabian Ambassador had called on Byroade in connexion with the Buraimi incident. The Second Secretary of the Saudi Embassy had previously indicated that the Ambassador would be asking the United States Government to mediate in this dispute, but he did not do so and after expressing the hope that the United States Government would use its influence with Her Majesty's Government said that if a settlement appeared impossible by any other means the Emir Faisal, now on his way to New York, would be instructed to bring the case before the Security Council. The State Department got the impression that the Ambassador's approach to them had been modified as a result of your conversation with the Saudian Arabian Ambassador in London.

2. The State Department said they were relieved that no mention of mediation was made since it would put them in an embarrassing position, but they are inclined to think that if formally approached they would find it difficult to refuse such a request. We asked that if the Saudis were to put such a request, the State Department would give us time to consult you and make your views known to them. We also took the opportunity to emphasise once again that the British position in the Persian Gulf was a general Western interest and that it was to the Americans' advantage, at least indirectly, that this position should be maintained. This could only be done if we honoured the obligations we had assumed. As long as the Saudis thought that, by coming to the Americans, they could have a sympathetic hearing and possibly even some support, there would be no hope of their making a reasonable settlement with us. The best thing the State Department could do therefore would be to tell them to be reasonable and settle the matter with us amicably, and that they could expect no help or good offices from the United States Government. The State Department assured us that they had given the Saudis no aid or comfort and any suspicions we may have entertained that they had encouraged them in the past towards territorial expansion were unfounded. Nevertheless they were anxious to see that no trouble developed between the Saudis and ourselves. They then asked whether we were in a position to tell the Saudis when we would be able to resume the Dammam talks. We replied that Her Majesty's Government had certainly intended to do so shortly but the Saudi action at Buraimi in violation of the London Agreement, could not be ignored and we doubted whether you would be prepared to resume discussions until the Saudis had withdrawn the Emir Turki and his men.

3. The State Department then asked us whether a double withdrawal might perhaps be negotiated, *i.e.*, the Saudis from Hamasah and the Trucial Levies from the position they had taken up in the oasis. We replied that the levies had entered only that part of Buraimi indisputably belonging to the Sheikh of Abu Dhabi. Thus the position was not the same between the two forces.

4. We did not refer in any way to the Sultan's intention of occupying Buraimi village. We should be grateful for prompt information on the moves in this area and for authority to inform the State Department of them at as early a stage as practicable. We should also be grateful for an account of the conversation between you and the Saudi Arabian Ambassador referred to above since this will be of help in speaking to the Americans.

5. The State Department seemed rather shaken when we remarked, that so far as we knew the Chief Saudi interest in Buraimi hitherto had been as a centre of the slave trade between Oman and Saudi Arabia. Can you let us have any material on this?

Foreign Office please pass to Jedda, Bahrain, Muscat and Memin (Fayid) as my telegrams 6, 1, 1 and 45.

[Repeated to Jedda, Bahrain, Muscat and Memin (Fayid)].

EA 1084/166

No. 33

**MESSAGE OF GOODWILL TO HIS MAJESTY KING ABDUL-AZIZ IBN
ABDUR-AHMAN AL FAISAL AL SAUD FROM
MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL**

*Foreign Office,
October 1, 1952.*

Your Majesty,

Your Majesty's message has been communicated to me by your trusted friend and ours, Shaikh Hafiz Wahba. I thank Your Majesty for this message and for the friendly greetings which it brings.

I explained to Hafiz this morning the views of Her Majesty's Government on the situation in Buraimi; and as he informed me that he was about to leave by air for Riyadh in the next few days I asked him to give Your Majesty a full account of what he knows to be in our minds.

I am sure that with Your Majesty's accustomed statesmanship a settlement will be found in accordance with the friendship between our two countries, which remains unchanged.

With every good wish for Your Majesty's health and prosperity,

I remain, &c.
WINSTON CHURCHILL.

EA 1084/138

No. 34

EFFORTS TO OBTAIN THE WITHDRAWAL OF TURKI'S FORCES

Foreign Office to Sir Rupert Hay

(No. 653. Confidential)
(Telegraphic)

*Foreign Office,
October 3, 1952*

Muscat telegram No. 232 [September 28: Buraimi situation] to you.

We welcome the Sultan's assurance that he has no intention of firing and will use every peaceful means to secure Turki's withdrawal. He should be informed of the diplomatic action we are taking and of our Note (telegram No. 482 to Jedda). Until the results of these efforts and those of the Saudi Ambassador (my telegram No. 493 to Jedda refers) are known, we hope he will take effective steps to avoid any possibility of a clash with Turki.

2. Should the Saudis agree to the withdrawal of Turki, we shall withdraw the levies from Buraimi and call off the flights by the Royal Air Force. We assume that in this case we can rely on the Sultan to keep out of the Buraimi villages covered by the 1951 stand-still agreement (see my telegram No. 588) although we should not expect him to restrict his activities in Oman territory outside these villages.

3. If the Saudis refuse to withdraw Turki we do not, in the absence of any radical change in the situation, contemplate the use of force in order to expel him. It is likely however that we should maintain the levies in Buraimi. We should *not* wish to restrain the Sultan from entering Buraimi village and the surrounding area and we would so inform Ibn Saud. We appreciate that in this event it may be difficult to restrain the Sultan (or for the Sultan to restrain his followers) from launching an attack on Turki whose actions constitute an infringement of the Sultan's sovereignty. The dangers of precipitate action should be impressed on him. Armed clashes will make more difficult an eventual settlement by negotiation which is our objective.

EA 1084/210

No. 35

FLIGHTS OF ROYAL AIR FORCE PLANES OVER BURAIMI

Her Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires to Mr. Eden. (Received October 9)

Jedda,

(No. 300. Confidential)

October 3, 1952.

Her Majesty's Embassy at Jedda present their compliments to the Saudi Arabian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and, with reference to the Note handed by His Excellency Sheikh Yusuf Yasin to Her Majesty's Charge d'Affaires on the 17th September, 1952, at Riyadh and to the respected Ministry's Notes No. 1/1/10/1251 of the 19th September, 1952, and No. 1/1/10/5 of the 23rd September, 1952, have the honour on the instructions of Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to make the following communication in reply.

2. Her Majesty's Government welcome the expression of friendship by the Saudi Arabian Government and note in particular the Saudi Arabian Government's determination to solve the frontier problem in accordance with the requirements of friendship. Her Majesty's Government for their part have never imagined any other possibility.

3. As regards the Saudi Arabian Government's statement that "No mention of Buraimi occurred during the London discussions because it was no concern of the British Government. Consequently the name of Buraimi was not mentioned in the Dammam Conference and it was not referred to in any way whatsoever" and that therefore Buraimi was not an area in dispute between the two Governments, Her Majesty's Government would point out that the London discussions were preceded by correspondence between the two Governments about the proposal to set up a fact-finding commission to examine the situation in all the areas under dispute between Saudi Arabia and her neighbours. It is clear from the Saudi Arabian Government's memorandum of February 7, 1951, (29th Rabi'a Thani 1370) addressed to Her Majesty's Embassy Jedda that Buraimi was such an area. It is of course true that the name Buraimi is not mentioned in the records of the London discussions, but the Saudi Arabian Government will not deny that Buraimi is included amongst the areas mentioned in paragraph 1 of the memorandum dated August 17, 1951, handed to His Royal Highness the Amir Faisal. Everything which was said during the London discussions in respect of the disputed areas applied at least by implication to Buraimi. The fact that Buraimi was not discussed at the Dammam Conference before it adjourned was purely fortuitous.

4. But even if there could be any doubt on this point Her Majesty's Government consider that there can be no justification whatever for the Saudi Arabian Government to send armed men into this territory. As the Saudi Arabian Government is aware Her Majesty's Government regard the territory as belonging to other States. They cannot accept the Saudi Arabian Government's claims to Buraimi and they must now, as previously, reserve their position in this matter on behalf of the Trucial Oman Sheikhdoms under their protection and on behalf of His Highness the Sultan of Muscat on whose behalf they are authorised to act in this connexion. They must therefore repeat their request for the immediate withdrawal of Turki bin Ataishan and of his followers from the area.

5. It follows from the foregoing that Her Majesty's Government cannot admit either that the flight of aircraft of the Royal Air Force over Buraimi at the request of the Sultan of Muscat to whom local sheikhs had appealed, and at the direct request of the Sheikhs of the Trucial Coast, and the visit of the Trucial Oman Levies to the villages inhabited by subjects of the Sheikh of Abu Dhabi constitute in any way an act of aggression against Saudi Arabia or any infringement of Saudi Arabian sovereignty. In particular Her Majesty's Government would emphasise that the decision to send levies into Buraimi was forced upon them by the action of the Saudi Arabian Government in sending in the armed party led by Turki bin Ataishan and is designed solely to assure the safety of the tribes under their protection who have appealed to them for help.

6. Her Majesty's Government remain as always most anxious to reach a solution of this and other frontier questions, by means of friendly discussions in conformity with the long-standing friendship which so happily exists between them and the Saudi Arabian Government and hope it will shortly be possible to resume such discussions in an atmosphere of harmony and goodwill.

Her Majesty's Embassy take this opportunity to renew to the Saudi Arabian Ministry of Foreign Affairs the assurance of their highest consideration.

(1)

SULTAN'S CONCERN OVER THE BURAIMI SITUATION*Mr. Chauncy to Mr. Eden. (Received October 4)*

(No. 109. Confidential)

Muscat,

(Telegraphic)

October 4, 1952.

Foreign Office telegram No. 653 to you.

The Sultan is most upset with this turn of events. He says that he cannot now possibly keep out of Buraimi, Saparah and Hamasah villages south-east of Buraimi oasis, which are Sultanate villages.

2. Firstly, Saqr's village is Buraimi and he has submitted to protection and this cannot now be done without. Its fort is Sultanate property built by the Minister of the Interior's uncle.

3. Secondly, the tribes of Buraimi are undoubtedly Omani, and the whole people of Oman are calling upon the Sultan to restore the situation and assert authority as it used to be in the past i.e. to have a Governor for the area and maintain law and order.

4. Thirdly, the opponent camps have gathered and cannot now go back, nor can the situation around Buraimi be controlled without entry. The surrounding country is desert and it is necessary to go in or keep away altogether.

5. Fourthly, the Sultan is of course faced with the cost of feeding and other expenses of the tribal forces gathering. He cannot keep them waiting about

(a) because of the cost and

(b) because any lack of resolution may lead to dispersal, or independent action and general loss of control may result.

6. Fifthly, tribal leaders could never be convinced why he is suddenly refraining from turning out Turki and controlling his Buraimi territory now that they have gathered for the purpose.

7. Sultan confirms that he wishes to avoid clash with Turki or other Saudis, and will do his utmost to avoid it by trying to induce him to withdraw. But if he refuses the most he can do is, as already advised by Her Majesty's Government (vide Foreign Office telegram No. 628), to give ultimatum allowing a day or two after Hamasah is surrounded for them to withdraw. He must occupy these places, and cannot keep tribal forces, amounting to several thousand (it is now expected that with Imam's forces figures may reach ten thousand) waiting for Turki and about 30 others to make up their minds. Nor, as stated, will tribal leaders understand or tolerate such a situation.

8. In the circumstances it seems that as the Saudi Government themselves are solely responsible for this situation, we cannot agree to ask the Sultan to refrain from action in Buraimi which is demanded of him by the whole of the people of Muscat and Oman and to which there is no alternative if he is to retain respect and leadership.

9. Nor does it seem that we can agree with Saudi Government to continue negotiations on his behalf about the Sultanate boundaries until Turki and party have gone and the Sultan is in possession of his villages, as otherwise he would be negotiating from a hopelessly disadvantageous position through the loss of prestige, not only on those borders but throughout Oman.

EA 1084/167

(2)

ALARM OF KING IBN SAUD AT THE BURAIMI SITUATION*Sir O. Franks to Mr. Eden. (Received October 7)*

(No. 1893. Confidential)

Washington,

(Telegraphic)

October 6, 1952.

Your telegram No. 4209: Buraimi.

David Bruce, Under-Secretary of State in the State Department, sent for me on October 6 and said that Ibn Saud had spoken to the United States Ambassador in Jeddah on October 5 in somewhat alarming terms about his apprehensions of what was going on in the Buraimi area. Ibn Saud had said at one point that he saw no other solution but intervention by the United States who should join with the United Kingdom and Saudi Arabia in a Three-Power Commission to settle the frontier question. He had not pressed this point in further conversation and the State Department did not consider that he had formally asked them to mediate. He was, however, undoubtedly asking them informally to do anything they could to help them and he had invoked Mr. Truman's letter of October 31, 1950, promising help against anyone who attacked him.

2. In the course of the conversation the United States Ambassador had asked, on a personal basis, whether it would remove Ibn Saud's apprehensions if he could be assured that we were ready to resume negotiations immediately and if, at the same time, it was agreed that no provocative or aggressive action should be taken by either side (e.g. flights by the R.A.F.) and the armed groups of each side at Buraimi should stay where they were and keep quiet pending the outcome of the negotiations. Ibn Saud had appeared not to realise that it had been intended that negotiations should be resumed shortly and had not received the message from you which he had expected. (We told the State Department that one reason for this might be that he had not allowed the Saudi Ambassador in London to bring it to him.) Ibn Saud appeared to agree that these proposals would be helpful. The State Department now wished to put them to us. The most important thing in their view seemed to be to assure the Saudis that we wished to resume discussions at once and that meanwhile, and during the discussions, no further "provocative" action should be taken. They did not propose mutual withdrawal from Buraimi but rather the maintenance both of the levies and of Turki's force in their present positions.

3. I told Bruce briefly of the Sultan of Muscat's intentions (as authorised in your telegram under reference).

4. Bruce said that the United States Ambassador was leaving Riyadh on October 8, and the State Department thought it would be most useful if they could tell him our views on the above suggestions before he left.

5. Bruce made it clear that the State Department's chief desire in this matter was that,

(a) the question should not be brought to the United Nations;

(b) that they should not be formally asked to mediate.

6. May I please have urgent instructions on reply to be made to the State Department?

EA 1084/162

No. 37

(1)

SAUDI CONVOYS*Sir R. Hay to Mr. Eden. (Received October 6)*

(No. 550. Confidential)

Bahrain,

(Telegraphic)

October 6, 1952.

Buraimi Situation.

Saudi convoy of 11 vehicles carrying oil, fuel oil and with 36 armed guards arrived Hamasah October 5. This and all previous Saudi convoys are reported to have passed via Mirfah and Muqatarah. The latter place is about 20 miles south-east of Abu Dhabi in undisputed Abu Dhabi territory, cf. petroleum concession map TP [grp. undec.] 68. I should like to establish levy post there but doubt if a strong enough force can be raised without unduly depleting Buraimi.

2. First vehicles from Muscat arrived Buraimi village October 4 with message that advanced party of Muscat forces would arrive there October 5. Sultan's main forces are to assemble in Sohar October 10.

EA 1084/169

(2)

USE OF THE MUQATARAH ROUTE BY SAUDI CONVOYS*Sir R. Hay to Mr. Eden. (Received October 7)*

(No. 553. Confidential)

Bahrain,

(Telegraphic)

October 7, 1952.

My telegram No. 550.

It is now established that all Saudi convoys have been using Muqatarah route including the Turki original party. I am locating a levy post of about 12 in the vicinity mainly for observation purposes. They will stop any Saudi traffic which they can safely tackle promptly being instructed not to interfere with the large convoy under armed guard. A post of at least 50 men would be required to deal effectively with Saudi traffic here and even if reinforcements could be obtained from Aden levies we have not the transport to keep them mobile and supplied.

2. There are rumours that Saudi troops are being mobilised for despatch to Turki's assistance and it seems unlikely that attempt will not be made to reinforce him when Sultan advances. I suggest that we should tell the Saudis that we cannot allow the passage of reinforcements through Abu Dhabi territory and that we shall take every possible action including air action to prevent it.

**TURKI'S MEN AND THE FORCES OF THE SULTAN :
FEAR OF A CLASH**

Foreign Office to Sir Rupert Hay

(No. 672. Confidential)
(Telegraphic)

*Foreign Office,
October 8, 1952.*

Your telegram No. 549 [of October 6]: Buraimi.

Saudi Arabian Ambassador to-day informed us, on instructions that Turki's men had picked up the Sultan's message to Saqr. Turki had also got hold of a message from Ahmad Ibn Ibrahim calling upon some of the Buraimi tribes to raise levies and giving details of reinforcements due to arrive at the oasis. Turki had told the King that the people of Buraimi were refusing to obey the Sultan and asking Turki's protection against his forces. The Ambassador said Ibn Saud feared this complication might cause a clash.

**DANGER OF A MAJOR CONFLICT BETWEEN THE FORCES OF
TURKI AND THE SULTAN**

Sir R. Hay to Mr. Eden. (Received October 8)

(No. 561. Confidential)
(Telegraphic)

*Bahrain,
October 8, 1952.*

Washington telegram No. 1893 to you (not repeated to Muscat).

As Chauncy has pointed out in his telegram No. 238 to me (not repeated to other addressees) it will be extremely difficult to halt the Sultan now, and if we succeed he will probably never again attempt to assert his authority over his outlying tribes, and it will almost certainly be impossible to stop the Imam, who has launched a Jihad. The Sultan may be able to control excesses of the forces, but there is little hope that the Imam's tribesmen will exercise any restraint. Fortunately their present objective appears to be the Baluchi tribe in Dhahirah.

2. Unless Turki's party is withdrawn within few days a major conflict is almost inevitable.

3. Report regarding Saudi vehicles and troops at Kharaj contained in my telegram No. 559 is corroborated by report from Zaid at Buraimi that similar party is now at Hasa en route to reinforce Turki. I consider the report is probably correct as unless Ibn Saud withdraws Turki he must support him and his adherents in the area strongly, in the face of threats from Muscat.

SAUDIS AND THE FORCES OF THE SULTAN : DANGER OF A CLASH

Foreign Office to Sir Rupert Hay

(No. 681. Confidential)
(Telegraphic)

*Foreign Office,
October 10, 1952.*

Your telegram No. 561 [of October 8]

Everything possible must be done to prevent a clash between the Saudis and the forces of the Sultan. Effects of such a clash or of other incidents in the area might be widespread and the international repercussions might be damaging to the interests of Her Majesty's Government, not only in the Gulf but elsewhere.

2. It is clearly in the long-term interests of the Sultan himself that fighting should not break out. I rely on you to ensure that he clearly understands that he can expect no military support from us if he invites or provokes an attack by the Saudis. Our prospects of settling these disputes peacefully may be ruined by irresponsible behaviour on the part of the Sultan's tribesmen. I rely on you to make this also quite clear to him.

3. Until I know how Ibn Saud reacts to the proposals in my telegram No. 505 to Jedda, I am not asking the Sultan to keep out of his own territory but I insist that he must control his men so that his own long-term interests can best be safeguarded and so as to prevent widespread repercussions of what is at present only a minor territorial dispute.

4. According to the United States Embassy in London American influence is being exerted in the right direction with the Saudis. This is useful support for the representations which I have instructed Mr. Riches to make. These representations, however, may be ineffectual unless we see to it that the Sultan similarly exercises restraint.

5. It is important that I should be fully and promptly informed of developments and whilst it is doubtless unnecessary for all telegrams between you and Mr. Chauncy to be repeated here I trust that you will make certain that wherever necessary telegrams are so repeated.

6. In any case I would like to have your assessment and comments.

BURAIMI SITUATION : DISCUSSION WITH THE STATE DEPARTMENT

Sir O. Franks to Mr. Eden. (Received October 11)

(No. 1921. Confidential)
(Telegraphic)

*Washington,
October 11, 1952.*

State Department asked us to call this evening to discuss the Buraimi situation. We began by conveying to them the substance of your telegram under reference and of your telegram No. [grp. undec. ?681] to Bahrain. They were much pleased and said that Hart had spoken to the King in support of the suggestion of mutual withdrawal but the King had not been receptive. The full report of this interview will be available to you through the United States Embassy.

2. The State Department then said that the Saudi Arabian Ambassador had called on Bruce today. Hart (Director of Near East and African Affairs) was also present. The Ambassador explained that the Saudi Government were concerned at the way the situation was developing in Buraimi and particularly at the arrival of the Muscat forces. The Emir Turki had reported a tripartite agreement between the Officer Commanding the Trucial Levies, Saqr Bin Sultan, and a representative of the Muscat forces to cut the lines of communication between Turki and El Hasa. Turki had added that he feared an attack by these forces was imminent. (State Department are aware the Trucial Levies are under instructions not to provoke a clash). Bruce then asked if the aircraft flights had not stopped, but Ambassador did not know.

3. Bruce then enquired whether the object of the Ambassador's visit was to convey this information. The Ambassador said that his instructions implied that, if the United States Government wished to consider this as a formal request for mediation, they were to do so, but if they thought they could accomplish a settlement by informal means, it was for them to decide. The results were the important thing since the Saudi Government feared matters were moving to a head. Turki appeared to be convinced he was going to be attacked and Ambassador said he would defend himself. He also implied that the Muscat forces would not have moved but for British machinations, since he had never heard the suggestion before that the Sultan claimed this area.

4. Hart then said that United States maintained friendly relations with Muscat and had done so since the signing of the Treaty of Friendship in 1833. When he was Consul General at Dhahran he had visited the Sultan of Muscat in 1949 and had asked the Sultan the extent of his dominions. The Sultan had shown him a line running down the Ru'us Jabal and through part of Buraimi, so that showed that the Sultan had at least claims there before the present incident had developed. The Saudi Ambassador was somewhat perturbed at this.

5. Bruce concluded by saying that there seemed to him to be three alternatives for a possible settlement:

- (a) direct negotiation
- (b) mediation by the United States
- (c) arbitration.

These would have to be preceded by either

- (a) mutual simultaneous withdrawal (which Bruce urged strongly) or
- (b) standstill agreement on present site without prejudice to claims. Bruce said he wished to consider matters and would speak to the Ambassador again, probably about the middle of next week.

6. State Department said to us that they felt that for all practical purposes they had received a request for mediation, though this need not be of a formal kind. At the working level they had been considering the idea of arbitration and were much attracted by this; reports from their Embassy in London had indicated that some such thought had occurred at the working level in the Foreign Office also. (We did not mention your telegram No. 679.) They would be grateful for your views.

EA 1084/174

No. 42

(1)

STANDSTILL AGREEMENT: SULTAN'S REACTIONS*Sir R. Hay to Mr. Eden. (Received October 11)*

(No. 568.)

Bahrain,

(Telegraphic)

October 11, 1952.

Foreign Office telegram No. 681 to me.

Please speak to our friend at once on basis of paragraphs 2 and 3 and telegraph any developments in situation since your telegram No. 296 (sic.)

EA 1084/196

(2)

Sir R. Hay to Mr. Eden. (Received October 11)

(No. 569. Confidential)

Bahrain,

(Telegraphic)

October 11, 1952.

Your telegram No. 681 paragraph 2.

I do not think that the Sultan will accept argument in first sentence. He has at last united his tribes behind him and obtained long-sought opportunity of establishing his authority over the whole of Oman. He would sooner go forward and risk losing all than earn the contempt of the tribesmen by abandoning his project at this late stage after he has rallied them.

2. Reply to paragraph 3. If Sultan enters the territory of his tribes such as Bani Kaab and Abu Shamis who have submitted to the Saudis I fear that Ibn Saud will feel himself in honour bound to protect them and that a clash will result. This could only be prevented by asking the Sultan not to advance beyond Sohar. After all the encouragement we have given him cf. your telegrams Nos. 577 and 598 this would cause his lasting resentment and would probably convert him from a friend to an enemy.

3. You will see from my telegram No. 177 to Muscat that I have asked Chauncy to speak to the Sultan in accordance with your instructions and to report latest developments. There has been no news of importance from Buraimi during the last few days, and no sign of further Saudi reinforcements have been seen from the air within Abu Dhabi territory.

EA 1084/196

(3)

Mr. Eden to Sir R. Hay

(No. 694. Confidential)

Foreign Office,

(Telegraphic)

October 12, 1952.

Your telegram No. 569 which has crossed my telegram No. 691 strengthens my conviction that we must use all our influence with the Sultan to restrain him from any actions which will lead to a conflict. I wish you to realise overriding importance I attach to avoidance of clash between Saudis and Sultan's forces and I count on you to use every effort to this end, if need be by a personal visit. I quite understand Sultan's difficulties but if we are to secure standstill which will carry with it no reinforcement by any party Sultan must also comply. It is very much to his advantage to do so. He may be assured that we will continue to have his interests at heart and give his just claims our full support.

EA 1084/184

(4)

Sir R. Hay to Mr. Eden. (Received October 12)

(No. 570. Confidential)

Bahrain,

(Telegraphic)

October 12, 1952.

Foreign Office telegrams Nos. 691 and 694 to me.

Please inform the Sultan at once of the standstill agreement and make every effort to obtain his adherence on the lines proposed. If either you or he wish it I will come down to Muscat as soon as possible by charter plane or by land.

EA 1084/236

No. 43

AGREEMENT FOR A STANDSTILL ON BURAIMI

Enclosure "A" to Jeddah despatch No. 116 of October 14, 1952

*Message sent by H.M. Chargé d'Affaires through the Saudi Arabian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Jeddah to Riyadh on October 12, 1952**Jedda,**October 12, 1952.*

On the 10th October His Excellency Shaikh Yusuf Yasin handed to the British Chargé d'Affaires a document in which it was suggested that a complete standstill without prejudice to claims by any party should come into effect at Buraimi pending early resumption of negotiations. It was stated that His Majesty King Abdul Aziz had agreed provisionally to these proposals.

Mr. Riches is now authorised to inform His Excellency that the British Government is agreeable to this proposal in principle. It is Mr. Eden's understanding that this will mean that no reinforcements are to be sent to the oasis by any party.

Mr. Eden has also instructed Mr. Riches to say that whereas he is in a position to ensure that the Trucial Levies will observe this he cannot immediately give an undertaking on behalf of the Sultan of Muscat. He will however do his utmost to secure the Sultan's agreement to a standstill and observance of it.

Enclosure "B" to Jeddah despatch No. 116 of October 14, 1952

Personal message sent by H.M. Chargé d'Affaires through the Saudi Arabian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Jeddah to Shaikh Yusuf Yasin in Riyadh on October 12, 1952

On the 10th October you mentioned that your object was to secure the standstill in principle and that details could be discussed later. You will see that Mr. Eden has accepted in principle. I can assure you once again of Mr. Eden's genuine anxiety to achieve an amicable and equitable settlement and hope that the Saudi Government will act at once as though the agreement were in force. If there is anything of which you are doubtful, as you know Her Majesty's Ambassador is returning to Jeddah today and will no doubt seek an early opportunity of an audience with His Majesty and this would afford an opportunity for discussion with him.

Enclosure "C" to Jeddah despatch 116 of October 14, 1952

Communication in reply to both messages received from Shaikh Yusuf Yasin via the Saudi Arabian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Jeddah on the 14th October, 1952

I am happy to express the Saudi Arabian Government's pleasure in whatever conduces to a solution of the outstanding problem concerning "Bureimi and the frontiers". The Saudi Arabian Government being eager to maintain the friendship between her and the British Government.

2. The Saudi Arabian Government have considered your reply transmitted to the Saudi Arabian Ministry for Foreign Affairs on behalf of His Excellency Mr. Eden on the 12th October, 1952, as an acceptance in principle of the items mentioned in the Note I handed to Mr. Riches on the 1st October, 1952, which I repeat hereunder in confirmation thereof:— The British shall remove the restrictions and obstacles imposed by them (such as flying low over Buraimi, stopping the supply of provisions and restrictions on normal movements) it being understood that the Saudis are also to desist from provocative actions. In other words life is to revert to its normal course. The two sides shall remain at present at Buraimi and maintain their present positions. After that discussions will be resumed between the British and the Saudis.

These proposals have already been put forward by His Excellency Mr. Hare the American Ambassador at Jeddah. I stated in the Note that they had been accepted in principle by His Majesty the King and that the provisioning of the parties of both sides which are in Buraimi does not conflict with these proposals and that the foregoing should equally apply to those in whose name the British Government acts.

3. The Saudi Arabian Government considers the reply handed to the Saudi Arabian Ministry for Foreign Affairs by Mr. Riches on the 12th October, 1952, as an acceptance of these proposals and that each of the two sides will stop sending fresh reinforcements to Buraimi and that the Saudi Arabian Government on her side shall be strictly committed to the contents thereof so long as the British Government and those in whose name the British Government act are likewise committed.

4. It is important to note that the proposals put forward and agreed upon include the British Government and those in whose name the British Government act whether the Sultan of Muscat or any of the Sheikdoms of the Oman coast who have treaties with the British Government.

5. The Saudi Arabian Government mentions with regret the information received to the effect that on the 11th October two lorries (Diamond make) belonging to the Sultan of Muscat were seen in Wadi Al Jizi carrying 150 soldiers going in front of Ahmad Ibn Ibrahim to reconnoitre the way for him to proceed after them from Sohar to Buraimi. The Saudi Arabian Government requests sincerely that the British Government will hasten to advise these parties to return whence they came and not to continue on their way to Buraimi as this conflicts with the text concerning the non-despatch of reinforcements mentioned above.

6. His Majesty the King welcomes His Excellency Mr. Pelham the British Ambassador at Jeddah coming to Riyadh to discuss with him the details of arrangements which should preserve the complete standstill on the basis of the above proposals pending the negotiations which, the Saudi Arabian Government hopes, will start as soon as possible for a solution of the problem.

EA 1084/186

No. 44

(1)

DESIRE BY THE SULTAN OF MUSCAT TO FOLLOW UNITED KINGDOM ADVICE

Her Majesty's Consul-General to Mr. Eden. (Received October 12)

(No. 115. Confidential)

Muscat,

(Telegraphic)

October 12, 1952.

Your telegram No. 177.

I spoke to the Sultan this morning as instructed. He asks me to remind Her Majesty's Government that from the beginning he wished to settle this matter peaceably through Her Majesty's Government but after receiving advice, following Saudi rejection of his protest, to assert himself in Buraimi and deal with intruders as circumstances demanded, he now finds it embarrassing to revise his plan. However having asked for Her Majesty's Government's advice he means to follow it, and as Her Majesty's Government have evidently found it necessary to reconsider the course which he should be advised to follow, he now agrees to change, confident in Her Majesty's Government's assurance that it will serve his best interests and that they will do all they can to bring this matter to a successful conclusion.

2. In the circumstances he will continue with his present plans to meet his tribes in Sohar on the 15th October. It is absolutely essential that he should go there in person. Then if the proposed withdrawal or standstill agreement is to be implemented, to help him with his tribes, he requests that I should bring him a letter, before he sees them in the afternoon of 15th, to that effect on Her Majesty's Government's behalf, so that it may be clear that it is on this advice and why plans are to be changed. He would then halt everything and formulate, and let me know, his further plans to conform with Her Majesty's Government's advice.

3. For his sake I hope this can be agreed to and, if so, I request authority to inform him in writing to be delivered by me in Sohar that as Saudis have now expressed their wish to settle this matter amiably, and that as negotiations may take some time, it is necessary to modify the advice given in my letter of September 26 (vide my telegram No. 232 to Bahrain) and he should now adjust his plans to allow further negotiations to take place, and maintain status quo in the meantime.

4. As regards general situation, I read my telegram No. 249 over to the Sultan who endorses it fully except that he believes only about 400 men have gone to Dhahirah under another leader, possibly cousin of Salih Bin Isa who is back in Sharkiyah.

5. The Sultan has accepted this advice with considerable misgiving and I honestly believe my personal relationship went far to decide him. I shall find it very difficult to face him or to get him to accept anything further I say if this does not prove to serve him well. The alternative looked promising and justified, and there can be no doubt of whole-hearted response of the tribes to date.

6. The Sultan is also worried at financial implications of protracted negotiations, and I think he may expect some help in this respect if he has to keep tribes mobilized for long.

7. I will have to leave for Sohar on 14th afternoon so require instructions very urgently.

8. If Saudis refuse "Standstill," which must include cessation of Turki's obtrusive activities, the Sultan's plans for entry of his Buraimi villages will go forward on advice of Her Majesty's Government being received.

EA 1084/184

(2)

Her Majesty's Consul-General to Mr. Eden. (Received October 12)

(No. 116. Confidential)

Muscat,

(Telegraphic)

October 12, 1952.

I have not received Foreign Office telegram No. 691 to you, only telegram No. 681 and telegram No. 694 but as reported in my telegram No. 250 to you the Sultan is following, and I am sure will continue to follow, Her Majesty's Government's advice and I do not think there will be any necessity for you to visit Muscat.

EA 1084/186

No. 45

(1)

PROPOSED STANDSTILL AGREEMENT IN BURAIMI

Foreign Office to Sir Rupert Hay

(No. 703. Confidential)

Foreign Office,

(Telegraphic)

October 13, 1952.

I am relieved to see that the Sultan will follow Her Majesty's Government's advice. Please thank Major Chauncy for his good work.

2. You are aware from Jeddah telegram No. 264 and my telegram No. 542 to Jeddah of the details of the proposed Standstill Agreement. This may be communicated in writing to the Sultan as suggested in paragraphs 2 and 3 of Muscat telegram No. 250. At the same time the Sultan may be informed of the Saudis' wish for a friendly settlement and that we will support his just claims in the coming negotiations. The form of these negotiations will be decided after consultation with him and the Trucial Shaikhs. (My telegram No. 701 to you refers). Unless you see objection he may also be told of the possibility of arbitration (my telegram No. 691 to you refers). The Sultan must not be led to expect a quick solution and must adjust mobilisation plans accordingly. The idea of using force against the Saudis must be gently but firmly pushed out of his mind.

3. Please telegraph immediately confirmation that Her Majesty's Ambassador at Jeddah may inform Ibn Saud of the Sultan's agreement to the standstill.

EA 1084/186

(2)

POSSIBILITY OF GIVING ASSISTANCE TO THE SULTAN OF OMAN

Foreign Office to Sir Rupert Hay

(No. 704. Secret)

Foreign Office,

(Telegraphic)

October 13, 1952.

My telegram No. 703 [of October 13: Buraimi].

I wish to give urgent consideration to the possibility of assisting the Sultan to establish his authority over his territory. Apart from the claims of long-standing friendship, I do not wish to lose his co-operation in view of our potential large economic interest in Oman. I am anxious, without of course compromising the Standstill Agreement at Buraimi, for the Sultan to control effectively the Dhahirah area. Please let me have your recommendations urgently. No hint must be given to the Sultan.

EA 1084/186

(3)

Her Majesty's Consul-General to Sir Rupert Hay. (Received October 14)

(No. 120)

Muscat,

(Telegraphic)

October 14, 1952.

Foreign Office telegram No. 703 to you received.

Action being taken accordingly and person concerned was informed before leaving this morning and all accepted.

**SAUDI ATTEMPT TO INCREASE THE SCOPE OF THE
STANDSTILL AGREEMENT**

Mr. Pelham to Mr. Eden. (Received November 5)

(No. 124. Confidential)

Jedda,

Sir,

October 29, 1952

I have the honour to transmit herewith a copy of a letter which I handed to Sheikh Yusuf Yasin on the 25th October and a translation of his reply.

2. As you will already have seen in my despatch No. 123 the Saudis at the recent discussions at Riyadh made a determined attempt to extend the scope of the Standstill Agreement from Buraimi oasis to an undefined area termed "Buraimi region and its vicinity." I insisted upon the term oasis and eventually obtained it, but acting upon the instructions contained in your telegram No. 737 to Bahrein I cautioned Sheikh Yusuf Yasin to refrain from propaganda or provocative action in the controversial areas of Oman. Naturally enough he immediately demanded a reciprocal assurance on my part. This I attempted to avoid, stressing that it was not we who had begun propaganda and attempts to stir up the tribes, that in fact outside the Buraimi oasis we were responsible for no such actions as those from which I was asking the Saudi Arabian Government to refrain and that our whole object was a quietening down of excited emotions. It was, however, difficult to escape altogether from the implications of Yusuf's argument that if it was our object to calm the situation in controversial areas it was illogical to refuse to extend the Buraimi Standstill Agreement to them.

3. I rested my case mainly upon the text of the original proposals saying that we had met together to accomplish a specific task and that when that was achieved we could then get down to negotiations. Yusuf said that since I had asked for an assurance that the Saudis would refrain from provocative action in the Buraimi region and its vicinity he supposed I would give a similar assurance on the part of Her Majesty's Government and the Sultan of Muscat. Would I have any objection to writing these reciprocal assurances into the text of the document we were now discussing? I insisted on the task before us, but in order to gain my point about the oasis and to avoid the embarrassment of refusing to give the assurance for which he asked, I said I would send him a letter setting forth what my instructions required me to state. Yusuf made an attempt to discuss my letter and his reply in draft, but this I firmly rejected and in fact I did not receive his reply until the evening of the 26th October.

4. You will observe that in his letter Sheikh Yusuf Yasin sidesteps my point and instead proposes, as he did during the negotiations, that we should agree on an extension of the area to which the Standstill Agreement applies. Meanwhile the Saudi Arabian Government reserves its freedom of action outside the Buraimi oasis. This of course it was bound to do so long as I avoided, as I did, giving an undertaking on behalf of Her Majesty's Government and the Sultan parallel to that for which I was in effect asking when I cautioned the Saudis as instructed.

5. Neither the geographical definition of the "Buraimi region and its vicinity" nor that of "the controversial areas of Oman" was discussed. I deliberately refrained from asking lest it should provoke the Saudis to still greater claims. From chance remarks it seemed to me that the Saudis had not formed any very precise idea of the meaning of their own term. They hinted that the boundary of Muscat ran along the mountain chain. No mention was made on either side of the Imam and his tribes.

6. I am sending copies of this despatch to Washington, Bahrein and the British Middle East Office, Fayid and Muscat.

I have, &c.

G. C. PELHAM.

Enclosure No. 1

Mr. Pelham to Sheikh Yusuf Yasin

Dear Sheikh Yusuf Yasin,

In the course of our recent discussions on the Buraimi Standstill Agreement I informed you that Her Britannic Majesty's Government expected that His Majesty's Government would engage in no propaganda or intrigue in the controversial areas of Oman. We agreed that it was very difficult to define areas since the boundaries had not been delimited but that it was the spirit and intention that no action should be taken during negotiations with the intention of prejudicing a final solution of the boundary problems.

As I told you, I am of course prepared to forward any comments you may have to my Government.

G. C. PELHAM.

Sheikh Yusuf Yasin to Mr. Pelham

My dear Mr. Pelham,

October 26, 1952.

I have received from Your Excellency on 6 Safar 1372/25 October 1952 your letter addressed to me in which you state that Her Britannic Majesty's Government, on the occasion of the Buraimi Standstill Agreement, requests that His Majesty's Government engage in no propaganda or "intrigue" in the controversial areas of Oman.

I wish to assure Your Excellency that the Saudi Arabian Government respects itself too highly for its actions to be described as "intrigue", just as it desires to respect other parties too highly for their actions to be described as "intrigue" for the purpose of requesting them to refrain therefrom.

During our recent discussions on the Buraimi Standstill Agreement I expressed to Your Excellency the view of the Saudi Arabian Government that the standstill proposal that His Majesty King Abdul Aziz set forth and I communicated to Mr. Riches on October 10, 1952, was not intended to provide for a standstill in the Buraimi oasis alone, but was intended to provide a standstill in the whole Buraimi region and its vicinity. Your Excellency did not agree with this understanding because of your desire to adhere to the letter of your instructions, which specify a standstill in the Buraimi oasis alone. This view of the Saudi Arabian Government was inspired by its desire to prevent the occurrence of any incidents in the Buraimi region that might affect unfavourably the situation there and the good relations existing between the two Governments.

In your letter referred to, Your Excellency assured me that it was the spirit and intention of our discussions regarding Buraimi "that no action should be taken during negotiations with the intention of prejudicing a final solution of the boundary problems." It is understood by the Saudi Arabian Government that this assurance refers to the terms of the Standstill Agreement and embraces in a general manner the Buraimi region and its vicinity.

I agree with Your Excellency that the defining of the disputed areas was not a subject of our present discussions. It is the opinion of the Saudi Arabian Government that describing the disputed areas as "the Buraimi region and its vicinity" is more accurate than the description of them as "the controversial areas of Oman" mentioned by Your Excellency.

On the understanding of the Saudi Arabian Government referred to above, it is prepared on the basis of reciprocity to observe in the Buraimi region and its vicinity, rather than in the Buraimi oasis alone, the terms of the Standstill Agreement.

I shall appreciate the receipt of an assurance from Your Excellency at your earliest convenience that this is the understanding of the British Government and those in whose name it speaks. Until the Saudi Arabian Government receives this assurance, all parties must recognise that the Saudi Arabian Government considers the agreement applicable to the Buraimi oasis alone as long as that assurance has not reached it.

Accept, Excellency, assurances of my high esteem.

YUSUF YASIN.

**SAUDI DESIRE FOR A SPEEDY SOLUTION OF THE
FRONTIER DISPUTE**

Mr. Pelham to Mr. Eden. (Received November 5)

(No. 125. Confidential)

Jedda,

Sir,

October 29, 1952.

With reference to my telegram from Riyadh No. 3 of the 24th October I have the honour to confirm that, on that day and while still in the course of negotiation of the Buraimi Standstill Agreement, Sheikh Yusuf Yasin orally delivered to me a message from King Ibn Saud stating that he was anxious for the speedy solution of the Buraimi frontier dispute as a matter separate from the other frontier questions. The message continued that, while the King had no doubts regarding his sovereignty over the area, rather than jeopardise an old friendship, he would propose the setting up of a tripartite commission of British, Saudi and American representatives who would go to the region in question and carry out a plebiscite in accordance with the result of which the frontiers would be delimited. The terms of reference to the commissioners and the description of the area involved were to be decided when the principle of setting up the Commission had been agreed.

2. I expressed surprise that I should be sent this message before the tying up of the Standstill Agreement had been completed and before I had received an answer to your message requesting His Majesty's views regarding a resumption of the frontier negotiations

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(contained in your telegram No. 542 to Jedda). I added that I had always understood that any question concerning Buraimi formed part of the matters discussed in London in 1951 with the Amir Feisal (when the Sultan of Muscat had been represented by Her Majesty's Government) and that I felt it would be difficult to deal with different parts of the same question in different ways. Sheikh Yusuf denied this understanding.

3. In saying that I would report the King's message to my Government, I asked whether the Americans had been approached and was told that they probably would be shortly. However, on my return to Jedda my American Colleague informed me that this idea had been mooted to him a week before by Yusuf Yasin but that he had declined to discuss it, saying that while he had made a perfectly impartial suggestion for a standstill agreement he thought that there should be a friendly solution of the matter by the two parties without the intervention of a third. Mr. Hare indicated to me that he thought his Government would be no more attracted by the King's proposal than he was himself.

4. At a later meeting the same day Sheikh Yusuf Yasin produced the King's answer to your message. This, which I reported in my telegram from Riyadh No. 5 of the 24th October, emphasised his separation of the Buraimi question from those concerning the Qatar and Abu Dhabi boundaries and declared his view that the latter matters should be dealt with under the terms of the agreement made with Prince Feisal in London on August 24, 1951. Sheikh Yusuf confirmed that this meant a suggestion that the Dammam Conference should be resumed but he added that the Conference had so far not proceeded in accordance with the terms of the London Conference. I thought it best to avoid argument but it seemed clear to me that Yusuf meant that on resumption of negotiations the Conference would be pressed to form a fact-finding commission.

5. In my telegram from Riyadh No. 4 of the 24th October, I suggested that the only method now likely eventually to produce a solution to these frontier problems would appear to be an early offer of arbitration. I had in mind the reluctance of the State Department to be involved in the dispute and the possibility that they might be induced actively to support such a suggestion to Ibn Saud and thus avoid the embarrassment of either acceptance or rejection of the suggestion of their direct intervention. Also I think it would be difficult for the Saudis to refuse arbitration without putting themselves in the wrong.

6. It is desirable that it should quickly be decided what action may be taken if the King refuses arbitration and on what boundary line we would be prepared to make a unilateral declaration which can be defended either militarily or before any tribunal which might be appointed by the United Nations Organisation if an appeal is made to that body. But, while being thus prepared for the worst, it is to be hoped that before a unilateral declaration is made all possible pressure will be brought to bear on the King to accept arbitration, a measure not altogether dissimilar from his own suggestion of a tripartite commission. I have in mind the King's oft repeated expressions of friendship which, however misguided he may be in some matters, I believe to be genuine. I am sending copies of this despatch to Washington, Bahrein, Muscat, and the British Middle East Office at Fayid.

I have, &c.

G. C. PELHAM.

EA 1084/345

No. 48

PROTEST REGARDING A FLAG FLOWN BY TURKI BIN ATAISHAN AT BURAIMI

Jedda,

November 6, 1952.

Copy of H.M. Embassy's Note Verbale to the Saudi Arabian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Her Majesty's Embassy at Jedda present their compliments to the Saudi Arabian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and under instructions from Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs have the honour to refer to paragraph 3(c) of the Standstill Agreement regarding Buraimi dated October 26, 1952, signed by His Royal Highness the Emir Feisal and Her Majesty's Ambassador, and to state that the continued flying of a flag by Turki bin Ataishan is inconsistent with the letter of this paragraph and with the spirit of the Agreement in general.

This act is also contrary to paragraph 2(a) of the Agreement in which the proposals of His Majesty the King are quoted as follows:—

"It being understood that the Saudis are also to desist from provocative actions. In other words life is to revert to its normal course."

It is also requested that instructions may be issued in accordance with which the full spirit of the agreement under reference may be implemented.

Her Majesty's Embassy at Jedda take this opportunity of renewing to the Saudi Arabian Ministry of Foreign Affairs the assurance of their highest consideration.

EA 1084/385

No. 49

SAUDI REPLY TO OUR NOTE CONCERNING THE FLAG FLOWN BY TURKI BIN ATAISHAN AT BURAIMI

Jedda,

November 10, 1952.

Saudi Arabian Ministry of Foreign Affairs Note No. 1/1/10/130 of the 10th November, 1952.

The Saudi Arabian Ministry of Foreign Affairs present their compliments to the British Embassy at Jedda, and with reference to their Note No. 321 (1082/461/52) of the 6th November, 1952, about flying the Saudi flag at Buraimi, have the honour to inform them that the Saudi Arabian Government were surprised at the British Government's request not to fly the Saudi flag at Buraimi, where Turki bin Ataishan is staying, relying in their request upon a paragraph of Article 3 of the Standstill Agreement and another paragraph of Article 2 of the same agreement, in spite of the fact that the subject of the flag and the flying of it by His Majesty's Prince at Buraimi was considered to have been put an end to at the discussions with His Excellency the British Ambassador at Riyadh between the 20th October and 27th October, 1952. At the end of the discussion at the first meeting on the 21st October, 1952, His Excellency the Ambassador stated that he was instructed to request that the flying of a Saudi flag at Buraimi must be stopped, but the Saudi delegates did not agree to this request as it was in contradiction with His Majesty's proposals for a standstill. On the same day His Excellency presented proposals paragraph 6 of which contained a request for the cessation of the flying of a Saudi flag at Buraimi and when this request was discussed in the evening, it was understood that this request did not agree with the principle of His Excellency's proposals, that the present situation at Buraimi should remain as it is, and that the Saudi flag was hoisted during the standstill. When His Excellency the Ambassador on the 22nd October presented a proposal for a standstill agreement, the question of the Saudi flag was not discussed, as this subject was considered to have been concluded in the previous discussions. At the end of those discussions His Excellency referred again to the question of flying a flag and His Excellency was given the same answer as before, i.e. the flag was hoisted before the standstill agreement and the flying of this flag cannot be ceased. Subsequently the agreement was concluded with its provisions on the basis that the Saudi Arabian Government insist on keeping the Saudi flag hoisted and His Excellency signed the agreement though informed that the Saudi flag was hoisted and that the Saudi Arabian Government do not in any case agree to cease flying it.

The flying of a Saudi flag at Buraimi is not, therefore in contradiction with the text and spirit of the standstill agreement, since the question of the flag was investigated and discussed, and the agreement was signed on the basis of the Saudi Government's refusal to stop flying it.

The Saudi Arabian Government hope that on the basis of this statement the British Government will see their point of view and agree with them in the opinion that the present situation should be maintained as it was when the agreement was signed.

The important thing in the view of the Saudi Arabian Government is the fundamental solution of the dispute through a response to the proposals which were put forward by His Majesty the King for a plebiscite in the Buraimi area and its vicinity.

The Ministry take this opportunity to express their highest considerations.

EA 1084/386

No. 50

EXCHANGE OF MESSAGES BETWEEN HER MAJESTY'S AMBASSADOR AT JEDDA AND HIS MAJESTY KING IBN SAUD, REGARDING THE DISPUTE OVER BURAIMI

Jedda,

November 15, 1952.

(A) Copy of H.M. Ambassador's Aide Memoire for an oral message to be transmitted to the King by the Saudi Arabian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, dated the 10th November, 1952.

Your Majesty will remember that when I last had the honour of an audience of Your Majesty at Riyadh on the 26th October I told you that it was Mr. Eden's earnest desire to reach a swift and friendly solution to the present unfortunate differences over frontier questions. In his message to you Mr. Eden requested Your Majesty's views on how best an end might be put to these differences and assured Your Majesty that if there was any delay on his part it would be due to the necessity of consulting the Rulers of the Trucial Sheikdoms and the Sultan of Muscat.

Having now received my full report of my visit to Your Majesty's Court and Your Majesty's proposals, which are receiving the closest attention, Mr. Eden has instructed me to inform Your Majesty of his real appreciation of your desire to reach a settlement as befits trusted friends as speedily as may be. Mr. Eden reciprocates these sentiments and wishes me to assure Your Majesty that he will reply with the least possible delay. Meanwhile he is confident that Your Majesty will appreciate that acting as Her Majesty's Government does on behalf of the aforementioned Rulers it is necessary that they should be fully consulted regarding matters which so closely concern them. Mr. Eden wishes me to say that he has your proposals under urgent consideration together with the Rulers concerned in an endeavour to find a mutually satisfactory solution. I hope that it will not be long before I shall have the honour of presenting Mr. Eden's reply.

(B) Translation of oral message received from His Majesty King Ibn Saud on the 15th November, 1952.

His Majesty the King is pleased to know of the interest taken by Mr. Eden and the British Government in His Majesty's proposals and their endeavours to solve the "Buraimi" problems. His Majesty's impatience for a settlement is motivated by the desire to maintain the ties of friendship between His Majesty and the British Government. He appreciates the reference made by His Excellency the British Ambassador at Jedda as to the cause of delay to the reply of the British Government and His Majesty awaits a quick reply so that this matter may be settled.

EA 1084/347

No. 51

STANDSTILL AGREEMENT IN BURAIMI

Mr. Eden to Mr. Pelham. (Jedda)

(No. 135. Confidential)

Foreign Office,

Sir,

November 18, 1952.

With reference to Your Excellency's telegram No. 315 of the 12th November, I have to inform you that the Saudi Arabian Ambassador called on the Head of the Eastern Department at his own request on the morning of the 10th November, to discuss several matters relating to the Standstill Agreement in Buraimi.

2. Sheikh Hafiz Wahba said that three messages had been sent to you at Jedda from the King, but did not give any further details. As regards the flying of Turki's flag, he gave Mr. Ross to understand that, as we had at Riyadh accepted the fact of its continuing to fly, the practice could not now be discontinued. He indicated that it need not necessarily be regarded as prejudicing the question of sovereignty. He was told that though it might be contended that the flying of the flag was without prejudice, our view was quite the contrary. The flying of the flag conflicted with the stipulation in the Standstill Agreement that life should revert to its normal course. It was finally explained to the Ambassador that our friends greatly resented the flying of the flag in Buraimi, and regarded it as provocative, and he was told that we noted his intimation that the flag would continue to fly with considerable regret.

3. In regard to an enquiry we had previously made about Suleiman bin Hamyar, the Ambassador said that the Imam had been in correspondence with Ibn Saud during the last two months. The King would only know what Suleiman's mission was when he arrived at Riyadh. He said that members of his tribes were always visiting the King, and thought we were at cross purposes. Ibn Saud had at the outset suggested that there should be a general standstill, and it was at our wish that the standstill was limited to Buraimi. Why were we now complaining because members of tribes outside Buraimi were visiting the King? Mr. Ross pointed out that what we objected to was the part played by Turki in these matters. Turki had no business to be communicating with the tribes; he ought not to have first sent for, and then gone out from Hamasah to meet Suleiman.

4. The Ambassador repeated Ibn Saud's complaint at the treatment of Rashid Darmaki. He was told that we agreed that it was not desirable for a public exhibition to be made of this man. The Ambassador then made the astonishing personal suggestion that Rashid should be removed from Buraimi to Hasa or Riyadh. Mr. Ross expressed our surprise at this suggestion, and Sheikh Hafiz Wahba replied that he attached no particular importance to the place so long as Rashid was removed from Buraimi. He even added that Bahrain or India were possible alternatives! It was made clear to him that we were unlikely to agree to any suggestion of this kind, which implied that the Sheikh of Abu Dhabi had no right to punish Rashid as he saw fit. He was told that we had expressed our disapproval of parading Rashid in the streets, and that we would consider advising that he should not be treated with undue brutality. We did not however think that the Sheikh would welcome any suggestion that he should be removed from Buraimi.

5. This opportunity was taken to inform the Ambassador also that you had been authorised to inform King Ibn Saud that we were considering the King's proposal for settling the Buraimi dispute urgently with our friends. Sir Rupert Hay was on his way to Muscat, in this connexion. He was also told that if further parades or manoeuvres were considered essential for training purposes, the commander of the levies was to inform Turki in advance.

6. I am sending copies of this despatch to the Political Resident at Bahrain, to the Head of the British Middle East Office and to Washington.

I am, &c.

ANTHONY EDEN.

EA 1084/356

No. 52

UNITED STATES AGREEMENT TO SUPPORT ARBITRATION

Sir O. Franks to Mr. Eden. (Received November 20)

(No. 2130. Secret)

Washington,

(Telegraphic)

November 19, 1952.

We spoke on November 18 to the State Department as instructed in paragraph 3 of your telegram under reference and reminded them that if their agreement to support arbitration when they were sounded by the Saudis was to be effective, it was necessary to back it enthusiastically. The State Department agreed that no better suggestion for a solution to this problem seemed to have been found, though they continued to be doubtful about what the Saudi reaction will be. They added that they presumed that their backing for arbitration would be expressed in Washington but they undertook to telegraph to Mr. Hare, since we said that the Saudis would almost certainly consult him too.

2. As you know the State Department are much guided by Mr. Hare's views particularly as the Director of the Office of Near Eastern Affairs was on his staff before coming here and has great admiration for his judgment. I venture to hope that Her Majesty's Ambassador at Jedda will continue to use every means of convincing Mr. Hare personally of the merit of this course. We for our part are urging it continually on the State Department in order to keep them up to their promise.

EA 1084/412

No. 53

(1)

UNITED KINGDOM PROPOSALS FOR ARBITRATION

Mr. Pelham to Sheikh Yusuf Yasin

(No. 334)

Jedda,

Your Excellency,

November 22, 1952.

On instructions of Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State I have the honour to state that Her Majesty's Government are concerned at the continued disagreement with the Saudi Arabian Government about the frontier of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, as it affects the Sheikdoms of Qatar and Abu Dhabi and the Sultanate of Muscat and Oman. They are most anxious for a speedy and equitable solution of this problem, since the continued failure to achieve such a solution may impair the long established friendship so happily subsisting between the two Governments. They are likewise disturbed by the possibility of friction arising between their friends, the Sultan of Muscat and Oman and the Government of His Majesty King Ibn Saud. Though sincere attempts have been made to reach agreement it has not so far proved possible to attain this end by bilateral negotiations.

2. After discussion with His Royal Highness the Emir Feisal in London in August 1951 a conference was held at Dammam which was adjourned on February 14 of this year. The argument advanced by the Saudi Arabian delegation at this conference, taken together with the substance of a subsequent message from His Majesty King Ibn Saud, communicated orally to Her Majesty's Ambassador by Emir Feisal in Riyadh on February 26 have led Her Majesty's Government to believe that the areas of disagreement remain large. Events at Buraimi during recent weeks have confirmed this.

3. The Saudi Arabian Government are doubtless satisfied of the validity of their claims. For their part, Her Majesty's Government sincerely believe that the representations which they make on behalf of the Rulers of Qatar and Abu Dhabi and the Sultan of Muscat are fair and based on full historical evidence.

4. In view of the foregoing Her Majesty's Government consider further efforts to settle this question by direct negotiation are likely to prove unavailing in spite of the goodwill and friendship of the parties, and that the time has come to revise the procedure by which a solution is being sought. Her Majesty's Government therefore propose both on their own behalf and at the request of the Sultan of Muscat and Oman that the difference of views regarding the position of the Saudi Arabian frontier be submitted immediately to arbitration by persons to be agreed.

5. If the Saudi Arabian Government agree to this proposal in principle Her Majesty's Government are ready to discuss the detailed manner of its implementation.

I have, &c.

G. C. PELHAM.

EA 1084/411

(2)

Message from Her Britannic Majesty's Ambassador to His Majesty King Ibn Saud

Jedda,

November 22, 1952.

On the instructions of Mr. Eden I have today delivered a Note to Your Majesty's Government in which Her Majesty's Government propose that a solution to our present differences regarding the position of the frontier of Saudi Arabia should be sought by means of impartial arbitration.

Your Majesty will remember that when I last had the honour of an audience of Your Majesty on the 26th October conforming to the 6th Safar Your Majesty assured me of Your earnest desire to settle this matter in a completely just and impartial manner. Your Majesty said that it was natural when friends disagreed to ask for purely impartial help in reaching a just and amicable settlement.

Mr. Eden has instructed me to assure Your Majesty that he has given Your opinions the most careful consideration. Mr. Eden's predominant desire is, as is also Your Majesty's, for a quick and equitable solution to this troublesome problem which has arisen between us and, like Your Majesty, he feels that this could best be achieved by invoking completely impartial judgment.

Mr. Eden believes that his proposal derives from Your Majesty's own views and has a real prospect of success and he trusts that our two Governments can co-operate in an equitable and conciliatory spirit in this manner to the achievement of a just solution.

EA 1084/371

No. 54

EMIR FAISAL'S COMMENTS ON PROPOSED DISCUSSIONS

Sir G. Jebb to Mr. Eden. (Received November 23)

(No. 872. Confidential)

New York,

(Telegraphic)

November 23, 1952.

Following from Secretary of State.

I handed copy of the note to the Emir Faisal this morning.

2. His first comment was that if any discussions were to succeed, steps must be taken to stop "action by officials on the spot" which were likely to prejudice the Standstill Agreement. He then said that in his view the problem fell into two distinct parts:—

(a) general frontier problems

(b) Buraimi.

In the view of the Saudi Arabian Government these were quite separate. He would like to know whether in our proposal for arbitration we intended to keep them separate. He was insistent on this distinction and said that it involved a matter of principle. Saudi Arabia considered that Buraimi and the frontier dispute could not be discussed under a single arbitration.

3. I pressed His Royal Highness on the principle of arbitration. I said I was not asking for any decision from him but hoped he would support with the King the proposals in our note. We knew that Saudi Arabia had its own point of view on these issues but we also had responsibilities to the Sheikhs and treaty obligations which we must fulfil. He replied that Saudi Arabia had no desire to make difficulties for the neighbouring States. I should not believe all that I was told about her ambitions. The King had suggested a Three-Power Committee for conducting a plebiscite in Buraimi and he wondered what had happened to

this idea. It seemed better to keep the dispute as a "family matter", rather than refer it to an international forum for arbitration. I assured him that we had no desire to make the dispute into an international affair. I was convinced that if we could find three men whom both sides could trust it should be possible to make progress by arbitration. The details would all have to be worked out and I was not asking him for any commitment now but to use his influence with the King in favour of arbitration.

4. The Emir reverted to the situation on the frontiers and said that no progress could be made so long as incidents were taking place. He mentioned that the Political Officer in Sharjah was causing trouble. I said that there were accusations on both sides and that if he would let me have a note of his complaints we would be glad to send him ours. I told him that I thought he would find the Americans were in favour of arbitration.

5. Conversation was friendly and I think the Emir will give good advice to the King. But it is clear that they are going to take a strong line about Buraimi as being an issue quite separate from other frontier disputes.

EA 1084/379

No. 55

UNITED STATES PROPOSALS FOR ARBITRATION

Mr. Pelham to Mr. Eden. (Received November 25)

(No. 330. Confidential)

Jedda,

(Telegraphic)

November 25, 1952.

Frontier dispute.

My United States colleague said that he had been instructed to support the proposal of arbitration when approached.

EA 1084/476

No. 56

FRONTIER DISPUTE

Message from Her Majesty's Ambassador to His Majesty King Ibn Saud on November 29, 1952

Jedda,

November 29, 1952.

Mr. Eden has instructed me to inform Your Majesty that he is giving careful consideration to the protests made by Your Majesty's Government concerning alleged incidents in the area covered by the standstill agreement. Mr. Eden has informed me of his anxiety to abide by the terms of the Standstill Agreement dated October 26, 1952, 6th Safar, 1372, and to work for an amicable and equitable settlement of the dispute. He has strongly expressed his view that recriminations should not be allowed to poison the atmosphere in which both Her Majesty's Government and Your Majesty's Government are working for a mutually satisfactory and just settlement. Mr. Eden has said that he believes that these are also Your Majesty's views. It was in this belief that Mr. Eden put forward his proposal for arbitration as leading to a just settlement without recrimination on either side. The more quickly this solution can be put into effect the less chance there will be of incidents occurring which lead to the unhappy state of protest and counter-protest.

Mr. Eden has very much been bearing in mind the need for all parties to be as conciliatory as possible, but in view of the growing number of protests made by Your Majesty's Government he feels obliged to state that Turki bin Ataishan is primarily responsible for the unsettled state of affairs in Buraimi not only by reason of his original incursion, but also because of the activities in which he continues to engage.

In your Majesty's original proposals for a standstill agreement it was stated that the intention of the provisions of the agreement was that "life is to revert to its normal course". Yet information received by Her Majesty's Government shows that Turki bin Ataishan continues in the very same activities which he employed before the standstill agreement with the deliberate intention of prejudicing a decision of the ownership of the oasis. For example, contrary to allowing life to return to its normal course he continues to feed the whole village of Hamasah, not merely the thirty men whom he brought with him from Hasa. This is clearly contrary to the standstill agreement in which Her Majesty's Government agreed that the party which came with Turki from Hasa should be allowed normal supplies.

Similarly it is known that Turki continues to give money presents to visitors and that he has enlisted the support of Qadis from the Trucial Sheikhdoms and other personalities from outside Buraimi to help in his propaganda amongst the tribes. These persons he rewards and

he has been putting a car at the disposal of one of them. It also appears that since the standstill agreement Turki has attempted to seize control of the village of Al Qatara which, as Your Majesty's Government well knows, is regarded by Her Majesty's Government as belonging to Abu Dhabi. It is known that Turki has even sent cars to Al Qatara.

I am informed that the Saudi Arabian Ambassador at London has represented the protests of Your Majesty's Government to Her Majesty's Government. I am informed that the actions of the Political Officer protested against have been greatly distorted. Her Majesty's Government cannot admit that the Political Officer's visit provides grounds for complaint.

I would reiterate, Your Majesty, that Mr. Eden believes that Your Majesty shares his desire for a just settlement which will maintain our friendship unimpaired. This mutual desire he believes can best be achieved by putting the proposal for an impartial settlement by arbitration into effect as soon as possible.

EA 1084/475

No. 57

FRONTIER DISPUTE

Oral protest made by H.M. Ambassador at the Saudi Arabian Ministry of Foreign Affairs on December 6, 1952

(Confidential)

Reliable information has reached Her Majesty's Government that Turki bin Ataishan has been and still is attempting to seduce certain subjects of the Sheikhs of Sharjah and Ras al Khaimah from the allegiance which they rightfully owe to their respective Rulers. In particular it is known that Turki not only received members of the Beni Qitab and the Khawatir who live in undisputed territory well to the north of Buraimi and are the subjects of the Sheikh of Sharjah and the Sheikh of Ras al Khaimah but that he also sent some of these and other tribesmen by car to Riyadh on November 27.

I am instructed by Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to state to the Saudi Arabian Government that he takes a serious view of Turki's attempts to tamper with the allegiance of these tribesmen who are the subjects of friendly Sheikhs. Such conduct on the part of Turki is contrary to the standstill agreement and is furthermore prejudicial to Anglo-Saudi relations.

EA 1084/477

No. 58

ARBITRATION PROPOSALS

Saudi Arabian Government messages of December 6

Mr. Pelham to Mr. Eden. (Received December 13)

(No. 148. Confidential)

Jedda,

Sir,

December 8, 1952.

I have the honour to transmit herewith translations of a Note and two Messages from the Saudi Arabian Government handed to me by the official in charge of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on December 6. These translations attempt to follow faithfully the twistings of the original Arabic. The Note and the first Message are the answers to the Note and Message which I handed to the Ministry on the 23rd November, the text of which were forwarded in my printed letters Nos. 138 and 139 of the 22nd November. The third Message is an answer to the Message I delivered on the 29th November on the instructions contained in your telegram No. 708 of November 25, the text of which was forwarded in my printed letter No. 146 of the 29th November.

2. In my telegram No. 345 of the 8th December I have already commented on the Saudi refusal of our proposal of arbitration and in my despatch No. 133 of November 19 I have attempted to assess the instruments of policy available to the Saudi Arabian Government and the use to which they are likely to be put. I do not despair of eventually reaching an agreement with the Saudi Arabian Government on the frontier question, but their rejection of arbitration strongly suggests to me that we are unlikely to achieve what we would be prepared to consider as a satisfactory settlement so long as the Saudis remain convinced that with the passage of time their influence and power is increasing while ours is waning.

3. I have therefore felt it my duty to suggest to you with all respect that our policy should be "suaviter in modo fortiter in re". If such a policy is to be effective it will probably require a considerable increase of expenditure by Her Majesty's Government in the area of the Persian Gulf. Both on the Trucial Coast and in Muscat British military and economic strength will have to be made manifest and an influence at least equal to that of the Saudis will have to be exerted upon the tribes.

4. The only alternative to this policy seems to me to be a considerable retreat all along the line which might in effect mean abdicating our position in the Persian Gulf.

5. I should expect that if the tide begins to turn against them the Saudi Arabian Government would be prepared to come to a reasonable agreement upon the frontiers either by means of arbitration or possibly by direct negotiation. If some sort of equilibrium were reached then a frontier unilaterally declared by us even if opposed by the Saudis might well come to be the recognised line and we should at least have a basis upon which to resist further Saudi encroachment.

6. I should be grateful for instructions as to what replies, if any I am to make to these various communications from the Saudi Arabian Government.

I am sending copies of this despatch, with its enclosures, to the Political Resident, Bahrain, the Political Agent, Muscat, H.M. Ambassador, Washington, and Head of B.E.M.O. (Fayid).

I have, &c.

G. C. PELHAM.

Enclosure No. 1

From Saudi Arabian Ministry of Foreign Affairs

(Ref: 1/1/10/197)

Your Excellency,

December 6, 1952.

I have received Your Excellency's Note No. 334/1082/550/52 dated November 22, 1952, in which you have outlined, on the instructions of Her Majesty's Foreign Secretary, the point of view of the British Government in the differences which unhappily exist between our two Governments concerning the Buraimi area and its vicinity and in the matter of the demarcation of the boundaries between the Saudi Arabian Government and some Sheikdoms on the Persian Gulf.

2. The Saudi Arabian Government shares with Her Majesty's Government the anxiety which they have expressed in their Note referred to above since it has not been possible to reach an agreement for the solution of the frontier problems in the South East of the Arabian Peninsula between the Saudi Arabian Government and those in whose name the British Government has stated that she acts. Nothing urges the Saudi Government in their continual desire to solve these frontier questions in a way both friendly and equitably but their wish to maintain the old firm friendship between themselves and the British Government and they would not like a blemish to mar this friendship as a result of the attitude which the British Government have adopted on the grounds of defending those whose defence she has wished to undertake. The Saudi Arabian Government therefore welcomes any just solution to the outstanding frontier questions and is anxious, on its part, to do all that will smooth the way towards reaching such a solution.

3. During the negotiations which preceded the signing of the standstill agreement at Riyadh on the 26th October, 1952, between H.R.H. the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Your Excellency, as Her Britannic Majesty's Ambassador, His Majesty King Abdul Aziz proposed a line of action for the treatment of the situation in Buraimi, and that is the formation of a tripartite committee to carry out a plebiscite in the Buraimi area and its vicinity, so that the borders of that area may be decided in the light of the result of the plebiscite. His Majesty King Abdul Aziz's Government have received no reply from the British Government to this proposal.

4. In Your Excellency's Note referred to dated November 22, 1952, the British Government made a counter proposal, on her own behalf and at the request of the Sultan of Muscat, which stated that in view of the difference in the points of view on the subject of the Saudi Arabian border, it is proposed that the difference be submitted to arbitration by persons to be agreed upon. His Majesty's Government have noticed that the terms of this proposal have been set forth in an extremely general manner, where the Note of the British Government has combined what is stated therein on behalf of the Ruler of Qatar and the Sheikh of Abu Dhabi and what is stated in the name of the Sultan of Muscat, into one subject which she called the subject of the Saudi Arabian border. This counter proposal did not take into consideration the fundamental distinction between the true character of the fundamental difference between what was stated concerning the difference which has recently arisen between the Saudi Arabian Kingdom and the Sultan of Muscat and the difference over the frontiers which exists between the Saudi Arabian Government and some of the other Sheikdoms in the Persian Gulf. The extent of the difference between the Saudi Arabian Government and some Sheikdoms in the Persian Gulf has been defined at the London meeting which took place in August 1951, as has also been defined a method of solution. This has been confirmed and precisely defined at the Dammam Conference in January 1952 whereas the matter in the Buraimi area differs from that since it affects a decision as to the sovereignty over a complete area and those who live in it.

5. The Government of His Majesty King Abdul Aziz have always maintained that the area of Buraimi and its vicinity is a part of the Saudi Arabian Kingdom and that the people who live in that area and its vicinity bear allegiance to His Majesty and His Majesty has no reason to doubt their loyalty and allegiance to him. This loyalty has been proved recently beyond any shadow of doubt and His Majesty cannot leave a land which is historically regarded as a part of his territory. Moreover, His Majesty cannot forsake that part of his loyal subjects who inhabit this territory. In view of that there is not in relation to Buraimi a question in which arbitration is possible.

6. The agreement concluded at Riyadh on the 26th October, 1952, required that negotiations between the two Governments should be resumed in order that a final settlement of the question in regard to Buraimi might be reached. Therefore His Majesty King Abdul Aziz proposed an agreement by way of direct negotiation for a plebiscite by a committee of three. This was proposed on the 23rd October, 1952, and His Majesty's Government are confident that the result of such a plebiscite will support the Saudi Arabian position in so far as concerns the inhabitants of Buraimi and its vicinity. After the future of this area and its vicinity has been determined, the Saudi Arabian Government would be prepared to demark their boundaries with the adjoining territories in accordance with Article 6 of the Jeddah Treaty. If a difference arises in relation to certain parts of the boundaries of the Buraimi area and its vicinity and it is not possible to reach an agreement on it by the method of direct negotiations, it will then be possible to look into the possibility of arbitration for a solution of this difference.

7. As regards the claims and disputes with some Sheikdoms of the Gulf about the borders of the country of Saudi Arabia, as stated in paragraph 4 of this Note the places of dispute have already been defined in the Dammam and London meetings as were also defined the bases upon which these disputes must be solved. The Saudi Government are prepared to carry out the principles which were agreed upon for the final demarcation of the frontiers on the basis agreed upon. Should any differences arise in the final stages of the proceedings then the two sides might consider the possibility of referring them to arbitration.

Pray, Your Excellency, accept my high regards,

YUSUF YASIN.

Enclosure No. 2

Message from the Saudi Arabian Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs by command of His Majesty King Abdul Aziz, dated December 6, 1952 (18/3/1372)

I am commanded by His Majesty my Lord the King to send Your Excellency the following answer to the message of his Excellency Mr. Eden, Her Majesty's Minister for Foreign Affairs, bearing the date the 22nd November, 1952.

1. His Majesty King Abdul Aziz is most concerned to reach an immediate agreement for the settlement of the frontier question. Even before the incidents His Majesty was endeavouring to put forward a practical proposal for the solution of this problem which would put an end to this dispute, a dispute which His Majesty never conceived would reach to the extent of the difference between himself and Britain which has actually occurred in this matter.

2. He has studied with great care and attention the proposal of Mr. Eden for arbitration in the problem of the south-eastern boundaries of the Saudi Arabian Kingdom. The principal factor in his study was the consideration of the easiest and most just solution which might lead with the greatest possible speed to a solution of the problems and this was because His Majesty the King believes that this is also the objective of his friend, Mr. Eden. The allusion which Mr. Eden made when he presented his proposal for arbitration in which he said "This is not a final matter" is fully appreciated by His Majesty since he gathered therefrom that His Excellency wishes to meet His Majesty's desire to find a solution to this problem. In view of the difference of position in regard to the places disputed between the Saudi Arabian Government and some Sheikdoms of the Oman coast and in view of the claims recently put forward by the Sultan of Muscat in the Buraimi area, it is in practice difficult to lay down one identical method for a solution of the two differences.

3. Therefore His Majesty King Abdul Aziz adjures Mr. Eden to work for the acceptance of His Majesty's opinion in the matter of a plebiscite in the Buraimi area as proposed by His Majesty on October 23, 1952, and that the principles decided upon in the London Agreement should be applied in respect of the differences with some Sheikdoms of the Persian Gulf.

4. If the proposal of His Majesty the King for a plebiscite in the Buraimi area and its vicinity was carried out and the result thereof became known and if the principles decided upon in London and Dammam for the other places are applied and if disagreement then arose on some points, the two parties would not lack a method which would enable them to solve any problem for the purpose of applying the principles which they have agreed upon.

5. His Majesty the King emphasises his adjuration to his friend Mr. Eden to consider in a practical way His Majesty's proposals and he will find in them the easiest and most equitable way of reaching a just solution in keeping with the principles of friendship and in agreement with the principles of the United Nations. His Majesty is full of confidence that if it is decided to solve this problem in the way proposed it will lead as quickly as possible to a solution of the question without complication or difficulties.

Enclosure 3

Message from the Saudi Arabian Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs by command of His Majesty King Abdul Aziz

I am commanded by His Majesty the King to request Your Excellency to inform Mr. Eden in reply to his message, handed to the Saudi Arabian Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the 29th November, as follows:—

His Majesty the King thanks Mr. Eden for what you told him about his great concern at the protests made by the Saudi Arabian Government on the incidents that occurred in the area covered by the standstill agreement. Whilst the Saudi Arabian Government thanks Mr. Eden for this concern they support what he said about the necessity of maintaining the terms of the standstill agreement, dated October 26, 1952. The Saudi Arabian Government believes that Mr. Eden and Her Majesty's Government support the necessity of the careful maintenance by both sides and by their officials in that area of the provisions of the aforesaid agreement and that these must not be violated so long as the agreement stands.

2. For that reason the Saudi Arabian Government and the British Government must not be lenient with any official who violates the agreement undertaken by the two Governments and each side must take all steps to execute the standstill agreement with all care in letter and spirit and without any deviation until such time as the problem is finally settled.

3. The Saudi Arabian Government believes that Her Majesty's Foreign Secretary cannot allow the officials concerned to violate the text of the standstill agreement and it is not permissible to veil their activities since they have actually violated the agreement. This Note therefore will explain clearly the contraventions of the agreement committed by the Political Officer in Buraimi and the Saudi Arabian Government are surprised that answer has been made by Her Majesty's Government to His Majesty's Ambassador in London that the visit of the Political Officer to Buraimi does not constitute cause for complaint. The Saudi Arabian Government had previously informed the British Government on the 13th November, 1952, that:—

(a) The Political Officer came to Bureimi accompanied by ten armed soldiers. He met Saqr bin Sultan for the purpose of inciting him to carry out action against subjects of the Saudi Arabian Government. He also made a tour in Buraimi and asked Zaid to establish a Post for the British Army near the Saudi position.

(b) On 19th November, 1952, the Political Officer came again accompanied by thirty men and remained five hours endeavouring to persuade Saqr to go to the Sultan of Muscat.

(c) Stranger still—and after the protests of the Saudi Arabian Government—the Saudi Government learns that the Political Officer came again on the 29th November, 1952, and made contacts with Saqr and Al bu Fallah.

4. The text of paragraph (a) of Article 3 of the standstill agreement reads as follows:—

"The parties at present in Buraimi shall remain as they are in their present positions. No reinforcements are to be sent by any party whatsoever. Visits of the minimum necessary number of personnel accompanying provisions, or the replacement of personnel withdrawn, will not be considered as prohibited reinforcements."

This is the text which appears in the standstill agreement; the Political Officer came three times accompanied by a force of armed soldiers and carried out military actions and political negotiations. His coming was not to accompany provisions nor to replace forces withdrawn. Therefore his coming is a direct contravention of the terms of this paragraph. Denial of this contravention by the British Government constitutes a matter more serious than the action taken by the Political Officer himself and therefore the Saudi Arabian Government wishes before everything else and before taking similar measures, that it should be decided whether or not the action of the Political Officer was a contravention of the standstill agreement. The Saudi Government, for her part, considers the action of the Political Officer a direct contravention of the standstill agreement and asks that the provisions of paragraph F of Article 3 should be carried out immediately in regard to that.

5. As regards the contraventions attributed to Turki in the Note the Saudi Arabian Government in that respect would state the following:—

(a) Ibn Ataishan was not and cannot be responsible for the allegedly unstable state of Buraimi, which was originally referred to as a raid by him, since his entry into Buraimi was by order of His Majesty's Government. The Saudi Government

considers the Buraimi area and its vicinity as her own undisputed property ever since it was taken by His Majesty's fathers and forefathers and it remained in contact with His Majesty till the days of his evacuation from his country to Kuwait; it rejoined him after his return to Najd. His Majesty retrieved the Kingdom of his fathers and forefathers some fifty years ago during which time no one appeared to dispute with him in that area. When Turki came to Buraimi neither the British Government nor those in that area in whose defence she pretends to act had any existence, name or mention there and none of those claimants dared to appear in that area except under the protection of British planes and forces.

(b) As for the serving of food by Ibn Ataishan to those who visit him as guests whoever they may be, His Excellency the British Ambassador was aware, when the standstill agreement was concluded with him, that Turki Ibn Ataishan or any other of His Majesty's Princes cannot refrain from feeding those who visit him. The British Government may rest assured that this process of offering food by Ibn Ataishan is not a matter restricted to him only as in those years of hunger caused by lack of rain the Saudi Arabian Government sends lorries to move the bedouins from the places they are in to neighbouring populated areas so that food and clothing may be distributed amongst them and to save them from dying of hunger. Turki Ibn Ataishan is one of His Majesty's Amirs and acts in like manner as the other Amirs in this regard which act cannot be considered a contravention of the agreement.

(c) As to the ascription to Turki of commandeering the services of some Qadis of the Trucial Coast and other personalities outside Buraimi to help his propaganda amongst the tribes, the Saudi Arabian Government asserts that after the standstill agreement Turki called in none of the Qadis nor any of the bedouin Sheikhs either from within Buraimi or from outside. But the people consider themselves as subjects of His Majesty and come to His Majesty's delegate and there is not the least violation of the agreement in this, particularly so if those Qadis and Sheikhs come from outside the Buraimi oasis to which the British Government insisted that the terms of the agreement should apply only and not beyond the Buraimi oasis. In point of fact, those of the inhabitants of Oman who visit Ibn Ataishan do not come as the result of any enticement by him or out of a desire for what he has or out of fear of him. But it is the actual fact not unknown to any of the British Government officials that all people of Oman bear allegiance and obedience to His Majesty King Abdul Aziz Al Saud, the motive for which being their Arab national feelings, and also a higher and more supreme feeling, and that is a religious loyalty. Turki Ibn Ataishan is far from being able to gather these thousands of His Majesty's subjects who come to him and he is less able to turn away any individual who visits him to express his loyalty and allegiance to His Majesty the King.

(d) As for the attributions to Ibn Ataishan that he placed a car at the disposal of one of the Sheikhs, and his attempts to control the village of Qatara, and the sending of cars to Qatara, the British Government are aware that the Saudi Arabian Government do not recognise that the Sheikh of Abu Dhabi has any sovereignty in that area and its vicinity and the Saudi Arabian Government have not committed themselves by any act which restricts their authority in the Buraimi oasis. Ibn Ataishan wields the authority of His Majesty in Buraimi and its vicinity and his jurisdiction in that area is not defined except by what is laid down in the terms of the standstill agreement. The Saudi Arabian Government are prepared to discuss any action of Ibn Ataishan if he has committed any act which contravenes the provisions of the standstill agreement.

6. The Saudi Government will send their reply to the view put forward by His Excellency Her Majesty's Foreign Secretary, Mr. Eden, regarding his proposal for a settlement of the frontier problem as soon as possible, but they request that the case of violation of the agreement by the Political Officer be decided immediately because this matter constitutes a serious breach of the standstill agreement.

7. The standstill agreement was made to be acted upon and therefore the Saudi Government awaits the reply of the British Government regarding the contraventions reported and which are summarised as follows:—

(1) On the 7 Safar, 1372, conforming to the 26th October, 1952, the British Force carried out military manœuvres using Bren guns and after the flying of a British plane over Buraimi on the previous day. The Al Bu Fallah also held a military parade in their camps and this was communicated to the British Embassy and the British Foreign Office on the 8th Safar, 1372, conforming to October 27, 1952.

(2) The British authorities brought pressure to bear, through the Governor of Sharjah on the Beni Kathab for showing their loyalty to our Government and they attempted to bring their leaders to Sharjah in order to imprison them; this took place between the 27th and the 29th October, 1952, and was communicated to the British Foreign Office on the 30th October.

- (3) Despite repeated approaches by the Saudi Arabian Government, Rashid al Darmaki was kept interned, this man is guilty of nothing except being of Saudi nationality.
- (4) The writing of letters on the 12 Safar, 1372, by the person called Ahmad bin Ibrahim said to be the Director of Internal Affairs to the Sultan of Muscat, to some of the Buraimi Sheikhs asking them to obey the Sultan of Muscat.
- (5) The arrest, on the 16 Safar, 1372, (November 4, 1952, of both Ali bin Quweisim and a partner of his during a transaction concerning palm trees which they sold in Sa'rah to a person from Najd and their detention in prison until they renounce their Saudi nationality. They were finally coerced into signing a document that they would not return to the Saudi post in Buraimi. This was communicated to the British authorities at the time.
- (6) The arrival of the Political Officer at Sharjah accompanied by ten armed men in two cars and his meeting with Saqr bin Sultan to incite him to carry out acts against Saudi Arabian subjects.
- (7) Acting under the influence of the Political Officer, Saqr bin Sultan detained, on the 12th November, Saleh bin Qabil and his son of Sa'rah and beat them severely because they were of Saudi nationality.
- (8) The Political Officer made a tour in Buraimi and asked Zaid to set up a Post for the British Army near the Saudi position.
- (9) On the 12th November, 1952, the British Ambassador in Jedda handed in Passport Regulations applicable to some parts of the Gulf, which were made after the arrival of Ibn Ataishan, whereas it had been agreed in the standstill agreement to do away with such formalities. The implementation of these Regulations is therefore considered contrary to the letter and the spirit of the agreement.
- (10) Forcing the two cars sent by Ibn Ataishan to be repaired in Dubai to proceed via Sharjah and giving instructions that they should do so in the future and observe the need to carry Passports which is contrary to the text of the agreement.
- (11) Forcing of Saqr bin Sultan by the Political Officer to accompany him to Sharjah and thence to the Sultan of Muscat but Saqr returned on camel back instead of by car having gone half way. The Political Officer came again to Buraimi on the 1st Rabi'a Awal accompanied by thirty soldiers and spent five hours with Saqr bin Sultan in order to persuade him to go to the Sultan of Muscat.
- (12) On the 25th November, 1952, Zaid sent armed men of the Al Bu Fallah in a car who occupied a house in Qatara near the house of Sultan Darmaki Sheikh of "al Dhawahir" and the children of the Sheikh fled and took refuge with Ibn Ataishan. This is contrary to the provisions of the agreement.
- (13) Once again the Political Officer came to Buraimi on the 29th November, 1952, accompanied by the Commander of the Eastern Force and meetings took place between them and Al Bu Fallah and Saqr bin Sultan.

EA 1084/433

No. 59

MEMORANDUM REGARDING THE BURAIMI AREA

M. Hafiz Wahba to Mr. Eden. (Received December 8)

London,

December 8, 1952.

Sir,

I have the honour to inform you that I have been instructed by His Royal Highness Prince Faisal to forward to you the enclosed memorandum regarding the Buraimi area, which His Royal Highness promised to send to you during his conversation with you in New York.

I have, &c.

HAFIZ WAHBA.
Saudi Arabian Ambassador.

(1)

December 8, 1952.

1. On October 13, 1952.

The British Government had accepted the proposals put forward by His Majesty the King on October 10 to cease all restrictions and preventive measures, the flying of aircraft at low level, and to cease from stopping convoys of supplies and restrictions on movement, also the Saudi Arabian Government would cease from acts of insightment that both parties were to remain in Al Buraimi each in its sector, after which talks would be resumed.

2. On October 25, 1952.

Contrary to the agreement British aircraft flew over Al Buraimi.

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3. *On October 26, 1952.*
British troops manœuvred with machine guns and automatics, also Albu Falah staged a manœuvre in their sector. These incidents were conveyed to the British Embassy and the British Foreign Office on the 27th October, 1952.
4. Between 27th-29th October, 1952, Britain, through the Governor of Sharjah, put pressure on the Bani Kotob, for their allegiance to our Government, and attempted to bring the heads of the Bani Kotob to Sharjah for imprisonment, but the latter refused to comply. This was conveyed to the British Foreign Office on October 30.
5. All our reiterations to release Rashed al Darmaki were unsuccessful although the British Foreign Office pointed out that it would look into this matter and release him if his imprisonment was political. No reason can be found for his detention except that the above mentioned is a Saudi Arabian subject. His continued imprisonment has, therefore, no validity.
6. *October 31, 1952.*
Letters were sent by Ahmed Ibn Ibrahim describing himself as the Director of Internal Affairs to the Sultan of Muscat to the Sheikh of Al Buraimi: Hamdam Ibn Khalaf Al Shamsi, Said Ibn Abd Al Wahed al Kaabi, and Said Ibn Abdullah Ibn Abd Alwahed, inviting them to submission and obedience to the Sultan of Muscat. This is inconsistent with the agreement of the 23rd Mobaram, October 13, 1952.
7. *On the 4th November, 1952.*
Ibn Quoaisim and his partner were arrested and imprisoned for selling their palm grove to a person from Nejd. They were also forced to pay a fine of 250 rupees. Although they had paid the fine their detention continued until they had renounced their Saudi Arabian nationality; they were also forced to sign a statement promising not to return to the Saudi Arabian sector of Al Buraimi. The British authorities were informed of this incident.
8. *On October 11, 1952.*
The Political Officer in Sharjah arrived in Al Buraimi with ten armed soldiers in two cars, this undoubtedly is contrary to the agreement. During his stay in Al Buraimi the Political Officer met Saqur bin Sultan insighting him against Saudi Arabian nationals.
9. *On the 12th November, 1952.*
As a result of the pressure put on Saqur Bin Sultan he arrested Saleh Bin Quabeel and his son, he also beat them severely for being Saudi Arabian nationals.
10. The Political Officer toured Al Buraimi and ordered Zaid to erect barracks for the British army near the Saudi Arabian sector.
11. *On the 12th November, 1952.*
Regulations for the use of passports in certain parts of the Persian Gulf were put into effect. As it was agreed to end these restrictions, any persuance of them would, therefore, be contrary to the spirit of the agreement.
12. After the agreement was accepted, Ibn Ataishan sent two cars to Dubai for repairs; on their return journey the Political Officer forced them to travel, first to Sharjah, and then to return to Al Buraimi, with which they unwillingly complied. The British Agents in Sharjah ordered them not to pass by Al Buraimi again unless they held passports, and that they must pass by the British Agency on their comings and goings to Dubai. The passport regulations and the reportings at Sharjah are contrary to the agreement.
13. The Political Officer conducted Saqur Bin Sultan to Sharjah proceeding thereupon to the Sultan of Muscat. Saqur Bin Sultan accompanied the officer up to a point called Asswad and then returned through the hills to Al Buraimi mounted instead of by motor-car. The Political Officer returned on the 19th November, 1952, to Al Buraimi with 30 armed soldiers, and for five hours conferred with Saqur Bin Sultan to persuade him to go to the Sultan of Muscat.
14. *On November 15, 1952.*
Zaid of the Al Bufalah sent men in a car to occupy a house in Quattarrah near to the house of Sultan Al Darmaki Sheikh. His son escaped to Ibn Ataishan. This incident is contrary to the agreement.

(2)

Mr. Eden to M. Helaissi

*Foreign Office,
December 30, 1952.*

Sir,

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of His Excellency the Ambassador's Note of the 8th December (FO/GEN/EKA), under cover of which His Excellency transmitted, on instructions from His Royal Highness the Amir Faisal, a memorandum concerning certain incidents which are alleged to constitute a breach of the Buraimi standstill agreement signed on the 26th October, 1952.

The contents of this memorandum are being carefully studied, in conjunction with a similar communication from His Majesty King Ibn Saud, handed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Jedda on the 6th December, which has recently been received; and a reply will be transmitted to the Government of His Majesty King Ibn Saud as soon as possible.

I have &c.

ANTHONY EDEN.

EA 1084/193

No. 60

**CLARIFICATION OF A MESSAGE FROM HER MAJESTY'S
AMBASSADOR AT JEDDA TO THE SAUDI ARABIAN GOVERNMENT**

Jedda,

December 9, 1952.

Her Britannic Majesty's Ambassador at Jedda presents his compliments to His Excellency the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs and with reference to His Excellency's Message dated (18/3/1372) December 6, 1952, has, purely for the purpose of the record, to request that the following be noted so that there may be no later difficulty about references to, or texts of, messages.

The message referred to in His Excellency's Note was a message addressed by Her Britannic Majesty's Ambassador to His Majesty the King dated November 22, 1952. It conveyed messages from Mr. Eden.

The portion of paragraph 2 of the message of His Excellency the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs reading:—

"The allusion which Mr. Eden made when he presented his proposal for arbitration in which he said 'This is not a final matter' is fully appreciated by His Majesty since he gathered therefrom that His Excellency wishes to meet His Majesty's desire to find a solution to this problem"

is not understood. There is no such phrase as "This is not a final matter" in the Note addressed to the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of the 22nd November, 1952, nor in the message addressed to His Majesty the King of the same date.

When presenting these communications to His Excellency Taher Redhwan at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Her Britannic Majesty's Ambassador produced no such remark. Her Britannic Majesty's Ambassador did say at that time that if the Saudi Arabian Government accepted the suggestion of arbitration in principle it would then be necessary to discuss the arrangements such as terms of reference and the personalities of the Arbitrators. Her Britannic Majesty's Ambassador added that Mr. Eden's own view was that three impartial arbitrators should be chosen but that of course this was a preliminary view since once arbitration has been agreed in principle the actual arrangements for it could be discussed and agreed.

Her Britannic Majesty's Ambassador at Jedda takes this opportunity of renewing to the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs the assurance of his highest consideration.

EA 1084/522

No. 61

SEDUCTION OF TRIBES : REPLY FROM KING IBN SAUD

Oral message from His Excellency Sheikh Taher Bey Redhwan, the Deputy Saudi Arabian Minister for Foreign Affairs, to Her Majesty's Ambassador on December 11, 1952

His Majesty's Government give an absolute assurance that Ibn Ataishan did not ask anybody to express his loyalty to His Majesty the King, but the people themselves show this of their own accord. As regards the Rulers of Dubai, Sharjah and Ras al Khaimah and their subjects His Majesty the King regards them as his brethren and they find with him nothing but respect and recognition of their rights. His Majesty knows what sincere love and friendship they have for him and the British Government can affirm to those Rulers the sympathy of His Majesty and his respect of their rights, for he knows what sincere friendship they feel for him and they know the same in regard to His Majesty.

UNITED KINGDOM SUPPORT FOR ARBITRATION

Mr. Pelham to Mr. Eden. (Received December 15)

(No. 356. Confidential)
(Telegraphic)

Jedda,

December 15, 1952.

Frontier Dispute.

All three Saudi communications enclosed in my despatch No. 148 of December 8 have been passed to my United States colleague by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs through Hare's Saudi Arabian interpreter.

2. I gave him copies of the translations, and after discussion, spoke on the lines of paragraph 3 of your telegram No. 5175 to Washington. He said he had already told United States authorities he thought arbitration was the best solution, and that participation in the plebiscite should be refused. He now realised that the whole matter was going beyond what he had anticipated. He would study the documents and think over all I had said. I pressed the idea that they should positively advocate arbitration. While he would not commit himself, he was obviously impressed with its desirability, and with the possibility that the Saudis were assuming the Americans to be a passive asset in this matter.

3. I think his thoughts on our troubles are tempered by his own attempts in getting the Saudis to be reasonable in Aramco and Dhahran Mission affairs, and I suggest as much effort in Washington as possible.

4. Our relations are very friendly and Hare took kindly my suggestion that mutual support, wherever possible, would serve us both better in the long run than giving way to demands which the Saudis thought they could achieve by playing us one against the other.

EA 1084/499

No. 63

AGREED PROPOSALS OF THE COMMANDERS IN CHIEF

Sir T. Rapp to Mr. Eden. (Received December 20)

(No. 726. Secret)
(Telegraphic)

B.M.E.O. (Fayid),
December 20, 1952.

Saudi Arabian Frontier Dispute.

You will have since seen 750 CCL. Following proposals have agreement of the Commanders in Chief.

2. The most effective way of resisting and controlling infiltration will be by our establishment of posts at key water and communication centres thus providing military backing to enable Trucial Sheikhs to deal with incursions which will largely come along coastal strip from the West.

3. If local facilities and in particular motor transport, accommodation and means of communication are provided, posts could be manned by R.A.F. Regiment. The strength of each post should be about 20 which might include some levies. R.A.F. element could be reduced when armoured cars arrive.

4. If funds are made available to Political Resident for recruitment to levies, accommodation, clothing and equipment including motor transport, it might be possible to build up levies to 350 in six months.

5. Outline plan might, therefore, be:

(a) Fly in a Wing headquarters and two rifle squadrons of R.A.F. Regiment to Sharjah.

(b) Action by political Resident:

(i) To provide locally from oil companies necessary transport to enable key posts to be manned and maintained.

(ii) To make arrangements for living accommodation and other facilities at the posts.

(iii) To concert arrangements with R.A.F. and R.N. for supply of this force from Iraq.

(c) Two flights of R.A.F. armoured cars to be sent to Sharjah by quickest means. This may take one month.

(d) Depending on the situation when the armoured cars arrive, it may be possible to fly out one squadron of the R.A.F. Regiment.

(e) One R.A.F. squadron of Vampires to be moved temporarily to Sharjah.

(f) R.A.F. to make special arrangements for communications.

6. Build up of levies.

One or two more British officers will be required and Arab Legion will be asked to supply extra instructors.

EA 1084/496

(1)

COMMENTS ON POSSIBLE ARBITRATION

Mr. Pelham to Mr. Eden. (Received December 20)

(No. 362. Confidential)
(Telegraphic)

Jedda,

December 20, 1952.

Frontier Dispute.

This subject was raised by Yusuf Yasin on December 19. I explained the delay in transmission of the documents. He asked for my personal views as to why no response had been made to the plebiscite proposal. I produced the obvious reasons of impracticability. He listened complacently and invited my views as to how arbitration could be conducted. I reproduced the points in paragraph 2 of your telegram No. 686 and emphasised that arbitration appeared to be the one impartial method of reaching a solution and thus satisfying the King's and your own strong desire to leave friendship unimpaired.

2. While remarking that arbitration was not a usual means of settling such problems, Yusuf Yasin remarked that our views did not seem fundamentally to be so very far apart. The Saudi Arabian Government would await replies to their communications.

3. This talk appeared to indicate that they have not completely slammed the door on arbitration, though I suspect delaying tactics especially if the Americans do not recommend it and they feel they can still gain by propaganda and infiltration.

EA 1084/497

(2)

Mr. Pelham to Mr. Eden. (Received December 22)

(No. 365. Confidential)
(Telegraphic)

Jedda,

December 22, 1952.

My telegram No. 362.

Frontier Dispute.

My United States colleague has now informed me that he saw Yusuf Yasin before I did on December 19 and that he strongly advocated arbitration. Yasin's response appears to have been similar to that in paragraph 2 of my telegram under reference.

2. I do not think that this apparently slight improvement in the Saudi attitude should cause us to hesitate on the strong policy outlined in your telegram No. 986 to Bahrain.

EA 1084/518

(3)

STATE DEPARTMENT VIEWS ON ARBITRATION

Sir C. Steel to Mr. Eden. (Received December 28)

(No. 2117 Saving. Secret)
(Telegraphic)

Washington,
December 26, 1952.

Frontier Dispute.

We had an appointment to see Hart, Director of the Office of Near Eastern Affairs this morning at the State Department in order to ascertain what action was being taken in response to our approaches of December 12 (my telegram No. 2285) and of December 15 (my telegram No. 2295). We had already on December 23 referred with appreciation to Mr. Hare's support or arbitration (Jedda telegram No. 365 [of December 22]) but the State Department had not then received an account of his conversation with Yusuf Yasin. Owing to delays in communication, it was only received in the Office of Near Eastern Affairs late on December 24. Hart said that although Hare considered he was still formally under instructions to support arbitration only if the Saudis sought his views, he had seen an account of our conversation of December 15 with the State Department and the Department's recommendations in support, and decided to use the opportunity when it arose during the course of Yusuf Yasin's visit to Jedda to come out roundly in support of arbitration as the most effective way of settling the dispute. We said we hoped the State Department would now feel able to speak in similar terms to the Emir Faisal and the Saudi Arabian Ambassador to reinforce Mr. Hare's action.

2. Before commenting on this, Hart referred with some concern to reports reaching the State Department from London that, at least at the working level, the Foreign Office might be contemplating the use of force. A report from London dated December 23 suggested that there was even some thought of dislodging Turki in this way. Ambassador Hare, who had been asked for his views expressed himself to be greatly concerned; he feared that the Saudis might appeal to the United Nations and in any case doubted the efficacy of the use of force in present conditions. A subsequent report dated December 24 suggested that Foreign Office thinking was after all on the lines of defence deployments in the Sheikdoms, including the despatch of armoured cars and a possible demonstration on the coast north of Liwa. (Hart also mentioned the visit of a cruiser but was aware that periodical visits by a cruiser were routine). The United States Embassy in London reported that they had expressed their concern, but had gathered that there was no present intention of taking this action and that in any case such action as would be taken would be tailored to the degree of Saudi provocation. They also understood that before any such action were taken this Embassy would be instructed to discuss it with the State Department. Hart drew attention to the effect any such move would have on the arbitration proposals; the United States would be put in an embarrassing position, especially if there were any demonstration in force just as they had declared their support of arbitration. Hart said that as he saw it from these reports, there was no problem at present, but he was concerned at what might happen if some further incident should occur.

3. Hart then said he intended to submit to higher authority that the State Department should speak in support of arbitration to the Saudi Ambassador here so that the Saudi Government should be in no doubt that what Mr. Hare had said was fully supported in Washington. The Emir Faisal was at present in New York and there was no one of sufficient standing who could be made immediately available to speak to him there at present but he would be coming to Washington on January 6 and if Hart's suggestion was accepted, the opportunity would be used to urge on him the merits of arbitration.

4. The State Department's latest information was that the Emir Faisal would be going into hospital on January 10 for a medical check-up. He would then take a holiday in the United States before leaving for Jeddah about March 1. Faisal may have it in mind to meet the new Secretary of State after January 20.

STATE DEPARTMENT VIEWS ON ARBITRATION

Mr. C. Hart to Mr. Hare, Bureau Director, 12/24/41

Dear Mr. Hare:

Reference is made to your letter of December 23, 1941, regarding the possibility of the Saudi Government appealing to the United Nations for assistance in the event of a Saudi attack on the Arabian Peninsula. The State Department has given this matter very careful consideration and has concluded that the United States should take a clear position in support of arbitration.

It is the policy of the United States to support the peaceful settlement of international disputes by arbitration. The United States has consistently supported the principle of arbitration and has been a leading advocate of the arbitration of international disputes. It is the belief of the United States that arbitration is the only method by which international disputes can be settled peacefully and justly.

The State Department has concluded that the United States should speak in support of arbitration to the Saudi Ambassador here so that the Saudi Government should be in no doubt that what Mr. Hare had said was fully supported in Washington. The Emir Faisal was at present in New York and there was no one of sufficient standing who could be made immediately available to speak to him there at present but he would be coming to Washington on January 6 and if Hart's suggestion was accepted, the opportunity would be used to urge on him the merits of arbitration.

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Very truly yours,
 [Signature]